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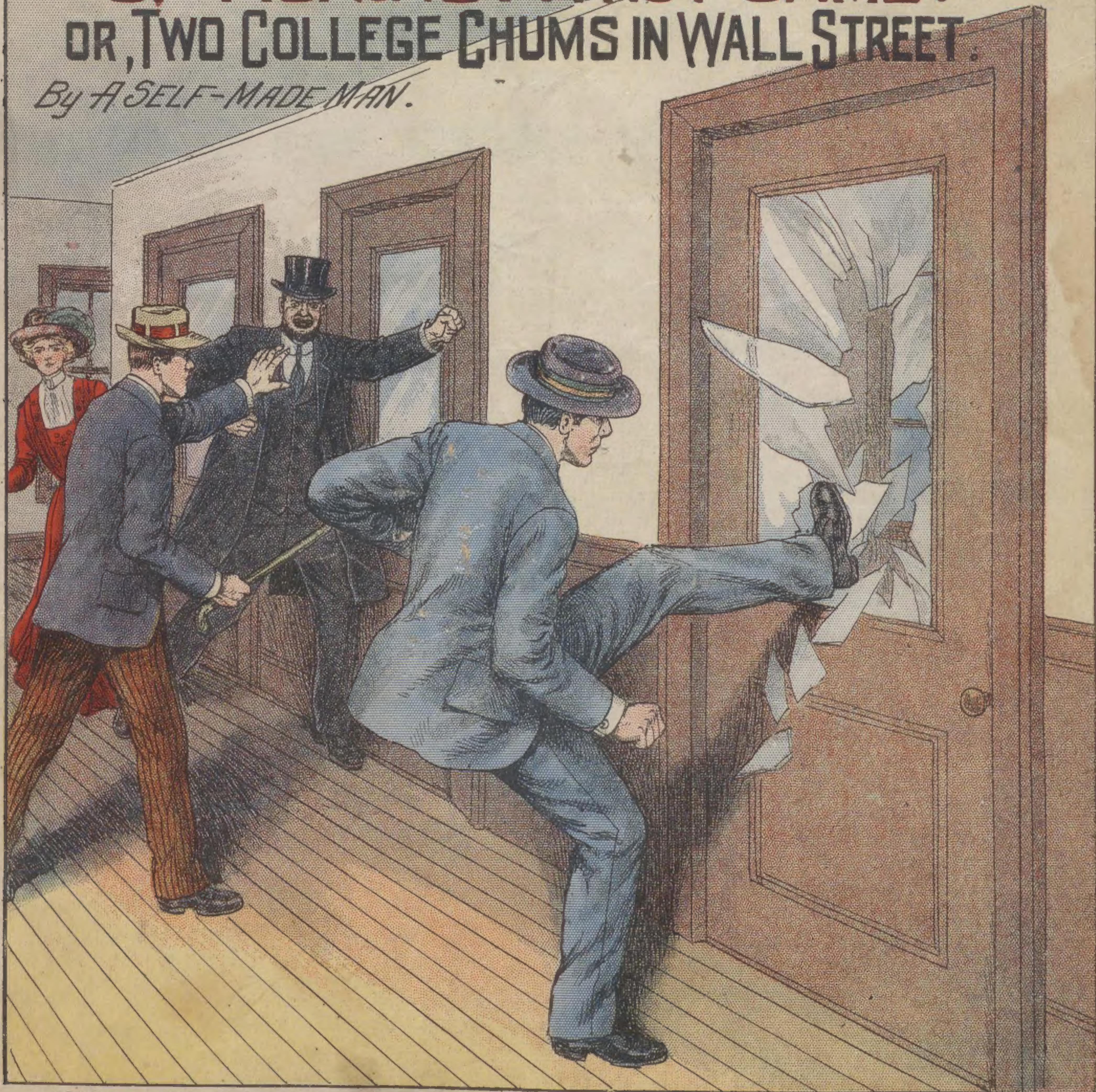
FORTUNE WEEKLY.

STORIES OF BOYS WHO MAKE MONEY.

UP AGAINST A HOT GAME.

OR, TWO COLLEGE CHUMS IN WALL STREET.

By A SELF-MADE MAN.



"Hold on, there, what are you doing?" shouted Broker Grafton, rushing forward as Dick lifted his foot and struck the glass a blow that shattered it into fragments. Tom stepped between his chum and the irate broker.

Fame and Fortune Weekly

STORIES OF BOYS WHO MAKE MONEY

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NEW YORK, APRIL 8, 1910.

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UP AGAINST A HOT GAME

OR,

TWO COLLEGE CHUMS IN WALL STREET

By A SELF-MADE MAN

CHAPTER I.

THE CHASE THAT FAILED.

"Step this way, Tom, I want to tell you something," said Dick Swift, in a low, tense tone, to his college chum, Tom Sloan. They had been out for a ride from New York on their motorcycles and had stopped at a roadhouse for refreshments.

"What's the matter, Dick?" replied Tom, in some surprise. "You look excited."

"If you'd heard what I did just now in the washroom you'd breathe a little quicker yourself."

"What did you hear?" asked Tom, curiously, as his companion led him over to a corner of the public room of the Black Eagle roadhouse. It was on the Reading turnpike, some twenty miles or so south of Jersey City. A crowd of rough-looking men were standing at the bar, and gathered in small groups about the place.

Tacked on the wall in the corner was a time-table of the Philadelphia & Reading Railroad, and Dick put his finger on it.

"Look at the time-table and don't open your mouth. Our movements are being observed or I'm greatly mistaken," he said.

"Why, what in thunder are you——"

"Shut up, I tell you. We must pretend to be searching for a certain train. I'm afraid the rascals suspect I overheard their talk."

"What rascals? What are you talking about?" asked Tom, much mystified.

Dick raised his left hand awkwardly and knocked Tom's hat off.

As it fell to the floor he turned quickly, stooped down and picked it up, at the same time sweeping the room with his eye.

"I did that on purpose, old man, so as to look around without appearing to do so," said Dick, brushing his companion's hat and putting it on his head.

"Say, what's all this mystery about? What has happened?" asked Tom, almost impatiently.

"Pay strict attention to the time-table, but keep your ears open. I'm going to tell you what I learned while I was washing my hands a few minutes ago," said Dick, working his fingers along the time-table as if his attention was wholly absorbed in the figures on it. "It's a mighty serious matter, old man. Don't look at me. Keep your eyes on the time-table. There are two men standing at the corner of the bar who have their eyes on us. I'm the one who's spotted, and they're trying to figure out whether I'm on to their game or not. Put your finger on the table and follow one of the trains down same as I'm doing. I've got them puzzled at any rate, but we're sure to be followed if we leave the room, that's the worst of it."

"Cut your side talk short, and let me know what——"

"You know Banker Pratt?"

"By sight, yes, as well as I know you," returned Tom.

"His automobile is outside."

"What if it is?"

"And he's upstairs in a private room with a friend."

"Well, s'pose he is?"

"He's got a grip with him containing \$50,000 in bank-notes in it."

"How do you know?" asked Tom, looking at his chum, and raising his voice.

"Not so loud, you chump. I know it, and the fact is also known to a quartette of scoundrels who have just laid a scheme to rob him after he leaves here for Jersey City. Two of them have gone up the road with a dynamite bomb with which they intend to wreck the machine when it approaches their ambush."

"Good gracious, Dick!" ejaculated Tom.

"Here, this is the train we want to take, I guess," said Dick, laying his finger on one of the columns. "Don't make any more exclamations like that. Let me see what time it is."

Dick pulled out his watch and looked at it, turning half around and taking a swift, covert glance in the direction of the bar.

The two men he had referred to had left the corner of the bar and were seated at a table almost within earshot of the two boys.

They were watching the lads like hawks under their slouch hats.

"Let's take a drink," said Dick, suddenly, grabbing his chum by the arm.

"A drink!" exclaimed Tom in surprise.

"Cider, of course. What did you think? Those two chaps have come over as near us as they dare, thinking to catch on to a word that would confirm their suspicions."

Dick dragged Tom to the bar and called for a couple of glasses of cider.

"It won't do for me to leave this room, so I want you to slip upstairs and warn Mr. Pratt. It is possible you may be stopped, for I believe those fellows have friends in this room ready to block any attempt on our part to reach the banker. I saw one of the two rascals make some kind of a sign a while ago and two men then lounged outside, and I can see them from here standing between the door and the auto. They're on the lookout. The rascals are not sure, as I said, whether I piped their talk off, but they are taking no chances. They're bound to get that \$50,000 at all hazards."

As Dick spoke a red auto rolled up to the roadhouse and its two occupants jumped out and entered the room.

They sat down at a table and called for drinks.

Almost directly Banker Pratt and his friend came into the room through a side door and crossed to the main exit, evidently on the point of leaving.

The banker carried a black grip in his hand.

"There's the banker now. It's too late for you to do what I wanted. Come, follow me. Get ready for trouble. I'm going to warn Mr. Pratt somehow. Slug any man who tries to stop me."

They walked to the door and passed out on the porch.

The banker's friend was already in the auto, and Mr. Pratt had stopped to examine a part of the machinery.

The two men who had lounged out in response, as Dick believed, to a signal, had advanced to within a yard of the banker's auto and stood there on the alert.

The two rascals inside had followed Dick and Tom.

Before the former could make his intended move the

banker sprang into the machine, turned on the power and the auto began to glide off, gathering speed rapidly.

"Too late," said Tom. "We can't do a thing now."

"Yes, we can," said Dick, with sudden animation. "Jump aboard this red machine and we'll chase them."

"Oh, I say we can't take——"

"Shut up—get in," cried Dick, shoving his companion into the red auto, springing in himself and turning on the power so quickly that the auto gave a jump and then was off like a shot after the banker's machine, which was already some distance ahead.

"Jove, what a nerve you've got!" cried Tom, aghast at his friend's appropriation of the red auto. "What will the owners think?"

"Let them think what they please," replied Dick, letting out another notch in the speed. "It's a good cause, and Mr. Pratt will make it all right with them as soon as he learns the facts."

"They'll think we've stolen their machine, and there'll be the dickens to pay at the roadhouse."

"What do we care? We've stolen a march on those rascals in a pretty neat way. Now if we can overhaul the banker before he reaches the creek bridge, a mile away, the scheme to rob and do him up will be knocked in the head."

"You're driving this machine at a mighty lively gait. If some farmer cop was to see us he'd order us to slow down," chuckled Tom.

"No farmer cop can stop us this side of the bridge to save his bacon. I've got the machine keyed up to the limit. She's humming, and we're gaining fast on Mr. Pratt; but unfortunately a mile is only a short distance in which to overhaul another auto that is traveling at a merry gait."

"Suppose we were to bust a tire now where would we land?"

"I'm not supposing such a thing."

"Or hit a stone that might diverge us into the fence?"

"Don't you worry."

"I'm not worrying. I was just thinking, that's all."

"That you might not see Wall Street again, eh?"

"No; I was wondering how it feels to be angels. We'd make a fine pair—you and me," and Tom chuckled again. The auto was fairly flying along.

It wasn't a high-power one, in the real sense of the word, but it was making probably twenty miles an hour at that moment.

The one they were in pursuit of was doing about fifteen.

As it had less than a quarter of a mile start, it was possible for the red machine to overtake it close to the bridge.

"As soon as we get a bit closer we'll yell out and I'll toot off to attract Mr. Pratt's attention," said Dick.

"That's a good way," said Tom, grabbing his soft-crowned hat to prevent it from being whisked off by a sudden gust that came across the fields.

From the roadhouse to the bridge the turnpike swept around in a broad curve.

The two rascals who carried the dynamite bomb had cut across the fields, thus saving about half the distance, so that they were already on the ground when the banker's auto swept into view.

"Here she comes, Bill," said one of them. "You want to toss the bomb into the road when the machine gets to

that scarred tree. It won't make any difference, I guess, if it goes off a trifle ahead, they are bound to stop at the explosion. That will do well enough for us and save their lives. All we want is the grip containing the money. We'll rush out, jump into the machine, plug the two men, grab the boodle and make off before they know what has happened to them."

"I'd sooner blow the blamed auto up and make sure of things," replied the other chap, holding the bomb gingerly at arm's length.

"Don't figger on that," answered his companion. "If you wait too long the machine is likely to pass over it before it goes off and then we'll miss the trick. Do as I say. We mustn't take chances just to make kindlin' wood of that whiz wagon."

"You leave the thing to me," growled the fellow with the bomb.

In the meanwhile the chase was progressing at an exciting rate.

"Now yell," said Dick as he began tooting the horn.

Before Tom could open his mouth the banker's machine swept out of view around a sharp curve that brought it in sight of the bridge and the two ruffians who were lying in wait.

So Tom didn't shout and Dick stopped tooting.

"Look out how you take that curve," warned Tom, a moment later. "If we skid we're done for."

Dick was aware of the gravity of the situation and with his hand on the steering gear he gauged the turn to a nicety.

Nevertheless the force caused the off wheels of the red auto to rise into the air and the machine swung around on the other two.

Fortunately Dick's calculations had been so exact that the auto held its way solidly to the ground and a moment later it was humming ahead as before.

"Whew! That curve almost took my breath," said Tom. "You're a dandy, Dick."

"There's the bridge, right ahead," said Dick, never starting a hair, his keen gaze fastened on the auto ahead. "Shout like thunder. We haven't a moment to spare."

They both shouted with all their might, and then Dick let off a succession of wild toots that awoke the echoes of the vicinity.

The banker and his friend turned and looked back.

Dick sprang up and motioned frantically to them to stop.

Mr. Pratt, judging something was up shut off power, but unfortunately did not apply the brakes.

The auto flew by the scarred tree.

The next moment a small black object, to which was attached a burning fuse, curved through the air and dropped into the road near the bridge.

The auto was nearly on it when there came a burst of lurid flame that mingled with the roar of a terrific explosion.

The front of the auto went into the air, and it turned completely over, hurling the banker and his companion into the bushes at the side of the road.

Through the smoke that clung around the spot two men mounted the fence and rushed forward toward the wreck of the machine, unmindful of the fast-approaching red auto down the road.

CHAPTER II.

THE ROUND-UP.

"By George, they've done it!" cried Tom, rising in his seat.

"Yes, unfortunately, but it's up to us to see that they don't get the grip with the money. The moment we slow up jump off on your side and I'll follow on mine. Then we'll go for those men. We've got no weapons except this wrench, which you'd better take, and this other tool, which I'll use. They may have guns, but we can't stop on that account. We must go for them like a cyclone and give them no chance to draw on us. They're thinking more about the money than anything else, and that may give us an advantage," said Dick.

The red auto dashed up and stopped just in front of a great gaping hole in the roadway made by the bomb.

The boys jumped out in a twinkling and rushed for the wreck, intent on preventing the two rascals from getting away with the grip full of money.

The larger of the two men had just fished the grip out from under the debris when Dick sprang at him with the tool he carried in his hand and felled him to the ground at a single blow.

The boy then grabbed the grip and looked to see if his companion stood in need of any assistance.

Tom was wrestling with the other ruffian whom he had failed to surprise.

The fellow Dick had knocked down was recovering.

The boy turned to find him reaching for his revolver, which he carried in his hip pocket.

Dick dropped the grip and threatened to brain him if he didn't lie still and throw up his hands.

The rascal reluctantly obeyed, giving the boy a menacing look that said as well as words that if he got the chance he would get square with the plucky lad.

"Roll over on your face," commanded Dick.

"I'll fix you for this!" snarled the man.

"Get over or I'll tap you again," said Dick in a resolute tone, swinging the tool close to the fellow's face.

He thought it prudent to turn over and did so.

Dick immediately took possession of his gun.

Then he put his knee on the man's neck and with his own handkerchief tied the scoundrel's wrists together above his head.

While he was thus engaged Tom had freed himself from the other man's grip and slugged him in the face with his fist, knocking him in a heap on top of the wreck.

Then he jumped on him and held him down.

This was the state of affairs when Mr. Pratt and his friend picked themselves out of the bushes, pretty badly scratched and shaken up, but not otherwise injured.

They were much astonished to see what was going on.

"What does all this mean?" asked the banker, looking at Dick.

"It means a hold-up in which you two gentlemen were lucky to escape with your lives," replied Dick. "There's your grip with your money. This chap was just about to make off with it when I nailed him."

"A hold-up, you say?" exclaimed the banker in an astonished tone.

"Yes, sir. A put up job to get the \$50,000 you have in that bag."

"Why, how do you know there is \$50,000 in that bag?"

"Well, I don't actually know it, but I heard a part of the plot to steal the money, and the sum mentioned was \$50,000."

"How did you hear this plot?"

"Quite accidentally a while ago when I was in the wash-room at the time you were upstairs in a private room with your friend."

"You heard these two men——"

"There were four in the scheme, but two remained behind at the roadhouse to prevent me from warning you, for they suspected I had overheard some of their talk."

"Well, well, this is a surprise to me."

"I wasn't able to get word to you before you started off, but my friend and I jumped into that red auto, which belongs to a party that stopped at the house for a drink, and chased after you. If our machine had been faster we'd have overhauled you before you ran into that dynamite bomb and have saved you and your auto from being wrecked. You're both lucky to escape, I can tell you."

"I am under lasting obligations to you, young man," said the banker. "There is \$50,000 in that bag and it's in bills. Only for you and your friend I realize I would have lost it. What is your name?"

"Dick Swift."

"And your friend's?"

"Tom Sloan."

"Do you live in this neighborhood?"

"No, sir. We are boarding in New York, and have just started in business for ourselves in Wall Street."

"Indeed. My name is Rufus Pratt, and I'm a banker at No. — Wall Street."

"We both know you by sight, sir, and are aware that you're a banker."

"Well, I shan't forget the obligation I am under to you. These rascals must not escape."

"I don't mean that they shall. They have committed a very serious crime, not to speak of the damage they have done to your machine. Looks as if it will have to go to the junk heap."

"I'm afraid so. It is completely wrecked. I suppose we can take them to the next town in that auto of yours."

"It doesn't belong to us. We pressed it into service without the owner's permission in our efforts to save you. We are liable to arrest for taking it if the owner feels disposed to make trouble, but I don't imagine he will when he learns why we took possession of it."

"Hardly," smiled the banker. "You needn't worry about that."

"Oh, I'm not worried. I'll stand by anything I do. Now that we have the machine we may as well use it to go to the next town, where you can connect with a train for New York. We'll take the prisoners with us and turn them over to the county authorities. Then Tom and I will return the auto to the roadhouse and make our explanation."

"We'll have to tie the rascals," said the banker. "I had

a coil of line in my auto. I'll see if I can find it in the wreck."

He went over to look for it, and while he was away Dick yelled out to his chum to see if the ruffian he had downed had a gun in his hip pocket.

"If he has, you want to take charge of it," he concluded.

The man squirmed about when Tom started to feel for a weapon.

"Lie still or I'll slug you on the jaw," said Tom.

That threat had its effect on the fellow, who then submitted to be searched.

Tom hauled out a revolver from his hip pocket and put it in his own.

Mr. Pratt presently returned with the rope and the two rascals were secured, hand and foot.

They were in the act of lifting the first ruffian into the red auto when two men suddenly leaped over the fence and approached them with drawn revolvers.

"Drop that man!" cried one of the newcomers, covering the two boys with his gun.

Dick recognized the men as the companions of the prisoners, the men who had remained behind to watch him at the roadhouse.

The moment he and Tom had got away in the red auto they had started across the fields for the bridge to join their associates in the hold-up scheme.

Before they had got half way they heard the explosion of the bomb, and that gave them the idea that the plot had succeeded, so instead of continuing on they altered their course for an old barn, half a mile away, where the four had arranged to go after the crime had been pulled off.

There they waited for their friends to show up.

When they failed to do so within a reasonable time they started once more for the bridge to find out what was detaining their associates.

On reaching the fence they saw that things had not turned out according to their prearranged programme.

It is true the banker's auto was a wreck, but they saw that their friends had got into the hands of the Philistines.

After consulting together they decided to jump in and rescue their pals.

Drawing their weapons they made their appearance as stated.

Dick and Tom were quite taken aback by the hostile demonstration which they were not looking for.

While one fellow advanced on them the other started for the grip containing the \$50,000, which the banker had put down when he went for the line.

Mr. Pratt tried to head the man off, only to find himself looking into the muzzle of a six-shooter.

"Drop that man, I tell you!" said the ruffian who was covering Dick and Tom.

Dick dropped the man's feet, then, putting his hand in his side pocket, pulled out the revolver he had taken from him, and cocking it as he raised it fired at the newcomer.

The fellow himself detected Dick's action and fired too.

Neither bullet hit its mark, notwithstanding the short distance that intervened, but they whizzed unpleasantly near both.

The fellow's attention being removed from Tom, that lad yanked out his gun and fired at the chap.

The bullet hit the rascal's arm, and with a howl of pain he dropped his revolver.

Disarmed, he was at the mercy of the two boys.

In the meantime the other man had secured the bag and was making off with it.

A shout from the banker called Dick's attention to the ruffian's success.

"Hold this chap till I catch the other fellow," he said, darting after the man who had the grip.

That fellow was on the lookout, however, and he wheeled around and fired at the boy.

The bullet ripped a hole in Dick's sleeve.

He lifted his revolver and fired at the man.

The bullet, though aimed at his body, hit him in the thigh and he fell, dropping the bag.

With an imprecation of mingled pain and rage he fired at Dick again, but the shot went wide.

"Drop your gun or I'll put you out of business altogether," said Dick in a resolute tone, taking deliberate aim at the fallen man.

The ruffian saw his finish unless he obeyed, so with another imprecation he let his revolver fall.

That wound up the case of the four plotters, and the second two were soon as helpless as their pals.

"You boys have no lack of grit," said the banker in a tone of admiration, a sentiment that was echoed by his friend. "You have saved my money a second time by your nerve and promptness. You both deserve gold medals for your courage."

At that moment a buggy was seen approaching at a rapid rate from the direction of the roadhouse.

When it came up the occupants proved to be the men to whom the red auto belonged.

They were on their way to the next town to notify the authorities about the supposed theft of their machine.

They reined in at the scene of the bomb explosion and made themselves known.

The banker explained the situation to them, and they were satisfied that their auto had served a good purpose.

It was arranged that all hands should go on to the next town, two miles away.

The owner of the red auto was to drive his machine with the prisoners while his companion took the banker into the buggy.

The boys and Mr. Pratt's friend were to walk.

So the procession started at a gait that would accommodate the walkers.

CHAPTER III.

IN THE LIMELIGHT.

On reaching the town the party inquired their way to the station-house.

They turned the prisoners over to the police and charged them with the crime they committed and the attempted robbery.

The rascals were locked up, and as their examination would take place on the following morning it was necessary that the banker and the boys should be on hand to give their testimony.

Mr. Pratt said he had to go on to New York by the next train, but would return in the morning.

Dick and Tom decided that it would be more convenient for them to remain in the town, so they registered at one of the hotels.

As they had left their motorcycles at the roadhouse, they told the owner of the red auto that they would take the horse and buggy back and turn it over to the roadhouse proprietor to whom the rig belonged.

Before taking his train the banker arranged to have the wreck of his machine brought to the town, with the view of selling it for what it would fetch.

When the boys got back to the roadhouse they told the proprietor the particulars of the bomb explosion and he was somewhat disturbed by it, fearing that as the scheme had been hatched on his premises he might get into trouble over it.

Dick and Tom then returned on their motor machines to town.

They reached their hotel just in time for supper.

"We've had a pretty strenuous time of it this afternoon," said Tom.

"Yes, but not half as strenuous as what we may expect to run up against in Wall Street while we're cutting our eye teeth as budding brokers," said Dick.

"Mr. Pratt is bound to tell his friends about the help we gave him, so we're likely to find ourselves somebody in the financial district by the time we buckle down to business again."

"We might become a one day's wonder, but that is the limit, I guess."

"That won't put any money in our pocket."

"Oh, I don't know," replied Dick. "This affair is sure to get in the New York papers and will bring us into some notice. That might attract one or two customers to our shop, and that is what we're looking for. We haven't got a start yet. Then we have made a good friend of Mr. Pratt. We are at present unknown to the traders in the street. It will be of great advantage to us to have a money-eyed man like the banker to call upon in case of an emergency. He would be likely to help us out in consideration of the obligation he feels he is under to us."

"I've always heard that there's little sentiment in Wall Street business."

"There isn't much sentiment in any kind of business these strenuous days. When I was young——"

"When you were what? For gracious sake, how old do you consider yourself?"

"I mean when I was a little kid things were a bit different. My father, you know, was a manufacturer and employed quite a number of men. He never fired an old hand because he couldn't do quite as well as a new and younger man."

"An excellent principle in its way, but might account for the fact that your father failed to do as well as his competitors, and when he died the business had to be wound up because it couldn't be continued at a fair profit. Had things been different you would probably be the prospective head of an iron and steel foundry instead of being obliged to make your own way up the ladder with the remnant of your father's industry."

"I'm not kicking. I can make my own way in the world."

"Yes, I guess you can. At any rate, I'm glad to hear you

for a partner. We were chums during our college career, and I hope we shall always remain chums to the end of the chapter."

"You mean the last chapter."

"Of course. We are practically in the same boat. Both of us have pooled our legacies in the brokerage business, and as neither of us has any home ties or good friends to call on in case of necessity, we stand on our own bottom and must sink or swim together."

"Don't talk about sinking, old man. We are out to win."

"Sure, but we're up against a pretty hot game. I've always heard that it is no child's play to hold one's own in Wall Street. The shrewdest brains in the country are there, reaching out for everything in sight."

"I don't think there is anything the matter with our brains, and we must reach out with the others. We have the advantage of youth and energy. As for experience, that will come in time. The smartest financiers did not blossom out all at once. We have as good a chance as anybody to succeed."

The two college chums talked a while longer and then turned in for the night.

After breakfast next morning they strolled around the town until it was time to appear at court.

Mr. Pratt did not arrive until after eleven, consequently the examination of the prisoners was held back until he came.

The testimony was so strong against the four rascals that the magistrate held them for trial, and they were remanded back to the county jail.

The banker invited Dick and Tom to dine with him and during the meal he drew from them their story about their modest start in Wall Street a month since.

They admitted that they had done nothing as yet in the way of business, but hoped to get into the swim before long.

"Where is your office?" asked Mr. Pratt.

Dick fished their business card out of his pocket and handed it to the banker.

"We're on the sixth floor of the Cotton Building, in about the center of the corridor," he said.

"I'll drop up and see you. If I can do anything to give you both a boost you may count on my doing so. You have saved me \$50,000, and that is a pretty tidy sum. I am greatly indebted to you and you won't find me ungrateful," said the banker.

The three returned to New York together by train, the boys checking their motorcycles as baggage.

They had originally intended riding back on them, but did not care to lose any more time.

Reaching the Manhattan side of the river, the boys bade the banker good-by, mounted their motors and started uptown for their boarding-house, which was in West Thirty-fifth Street.

During their short run down into New Jersey over Decoration Day the college chums had acquired a temporary brownish look that showed they had been out of town.

They were both stalwart, good-looking chaps and attracted the favorable notice of the lady boarders, one or two of whom tried to get up a flirtation with them, but without much success, since they came to the house.

Among the other boarders was an Englishman, a newcomer, who wore side whiskers and pronounced London clothes.

He spoke with a drawl and often substituted the letter "w" for "r."

He appeared to have taken a decided shine for Dick and Tom.

He was at the dinner table when the boys came in that night.

One of the ladies, noticing the particularly fresh look on the faces of the young brokers, asked Dick where they had spent Decoration Day.

"Rusticating in New Jersey," he replied politely.

"Haw!" exclaimed the Englishman, who sat opposite. "Been in the countwy, have you? To tell you the twuth, I hate the countwy. It's so awful dull, don't you know. There is nothing to see but gween twees, and cows, and but-tercups, and wabbits, and all that sort of cattle; I don't mean exactly cattle, but animals, you know."

"I'm not stuck on the country myself, that is as a steady sort of thing," replied Dick, "but I enjoy it for a change once in a while."

"In the countwy the sky is always blue, don't you know, and evwything bores you. Then the sun bwings you all out in those howid fweckles and turns you to such a fwightful color—a sort of cawotty wed color."

The speaker stroked his whiskers and stared hard at Dick through his single eyeglass.

"That wears off when you get back to the city," smiled Dick.

"Ya-as, I believe so, but it's deuced inconvenient while it lawsts, don't you know. Makes a chap look so howidly healthy."

One or two of the ladies tittered, for they thought the Englishman extremely funny.

Tom Sloan, who wasn't taking any part in the conversation, and was a pretty shrewd young fellow, had a different idea of the Englishman.

He sized the new boarder up as not such a fool as he appeared to be on the surface.

"I'll bet he's a grafter," he thought. "He's been making up to Dick and me in great shape. I wouldn't be surprised but he has an axe up his sleeve that he wants us to grind for him. I'll bet that London drawl is just put on for a purpose. That isn't the way I've heard real English gentlemen talk. It sounds stagy to me. Maybe he's an actor, and has got some scheme in view. Seems to me if he was the real thing he'd be at the Waldorf-Astoria and not in this cheap boarding-house. I must tip Dick off. It might be a good idea to encourage his side-choplets and see what his little game is."

Thus reasoned Tom as he listened to the Englishman detail his last experience "down in Surwey" where "the howid earwigs" got into his hair brushes when he left them on the window-sill; and when he lay down in the grass the "gwasshoppers, all legs, you know, play at leapfrog over your nose, which was howible torture."

The Englishman finally bottled up and the conversation became general.

The boys said nothing about their adventure on the New Jersey turnpike, as they were not of the bragging order,

but nevertheless the incident came up before they left the table.

The landlady's husband sat at the head of the table, and finishing before the others he opened his evening paper.

The editor of the town daily where the four rascals were examined that morning had telegraphed the facts to the New York press bureau and the story was printed on the first page.

The landlord read it with considerable interest and then looked at the young brokers.

"It appears, according to the evening paper, that you had quite a stirring time of it in New Jersey, young gentlemen."

The remark, and the significant tone in which it was uttered, attracted general attention around the table.

Tom noticed a sharp look come into the Englishman's eyes that rather belied his customary vacuous expression.

"Yes, Sloan and I had a little adventure on the Reading turnpike," replied Dick, with a smile.

"Seems to me it was of sufficient importance to have warranted you mentioning it," said the landlady's husband.

"You appear to be very modest young fellows, not at all inclined to push yourselves forward into the limelight."

The speaker's words only served to whet the curiosity of the boarders.

"Haw!" exclaimed the Englishman. "I am curious to learn what this stow is about. What happened to our young friends in the country?"

"Yes, do read us what the paper says," said one of the ladies eagerly.

Every one at the table being on the qui vive for the news the landlady's husband proceeded to read the newspaper account of the turnpike affair.

"Haw!" said the Englishman, stroking his whiskers when the reading was finished. "Vewy cweditable, vewy cweditable indeed, 'pon me word."

"My, how brave you were!" cried Miss Wallace, who, chaperoned by her mother, a stout woman, was studying singing in New York and fondly hoped to rise some day to fame and fortune at the Metropolitan Opera House.

"And you actually exchanged pistol shots with those men, Mr. Swift?" exclaimed another lady, whose husband was a commercial traveler.

Dick smiled but said nothing.

"Haw! So you pvented the wascals from making off with that gwip containing \$50,000? That's ten thousand pounds. Bah Jove! Quite a lot of money, don't you know," said the Englishman.

Dick and Tom, finding themselves made heroes of, accepted the situation good-naturedly, but had as little as possible to say on the subject, though everybody was anxious to learn more about the incident than was set forth in the newspaper.

They left the table as soon as they could politely withdraw, and went up to their room.

CHAPTER IV.

MR. HAWTREE OF LONDON.

"We'll be the star boarders after this," chuckled Tom, throwing himself into a chair, when they had reached their room.

"It doesn't take much to create a sensation in a boarding-house," said Dick. "I wonder what the ladies would say if I exhibited this bullet hole in the sleeve of the coat I wore yesterday?"

He held up the jacket and put his fingers behind the two perforations made by the bullet which, had it been aimed better, would have put him into a hospital.

At that moment there came a knock at the door.

"Come in," cried Dick.

The door opened and they saw the Englishman standing there stroking his side whiskers and looking at them through his monocle.

"Beg pawdon; might I bother you a few moments?" he said, drawlingly.

"Come in, Mr. Hawtree, and make yourself at home," said Dick cheerfully.

"Thanks; vewy kind of you," said the Englishman, accepting the invitation.

There were only two chairs in the room, of which Tom occupied one, so the visitor took possession of the other, while Dick pressed the bed into service.

"Haw! Quite comfortable here, upon me word," said the Englishman, crossing one of his long legs over the other and looking around, not forgetting to stroke his whiskers in a mechanical sort of way.

Tom watched him covertly, for his suspicions of the caller were strong.

"Yes, we try to be as comfortable as we can," replied Dick. "I suppose you find this city a whole lot different from London?"

"Ya-as," looking hard at Tom, whereat Sloan became suddenly interested in the ceiling.

"You 'on't have any skyscrapers in London, I guess," went on Dick.

"Beg pawdon," said the other, as if he didn't quite understand.

"Tall buildings, I mean," explained Dick.

"Oh, ya-as, ya-as," replied the visitor with a peculiar chuckle that caused Tom to look at him again quite intently, for it reminded him of the stage chuckle used by the Lord Dundreary type of Englishmen on the stage.

"How do you like this country—what you've seen of it?" continued Dick.

"Haw! I really cawn't give an opinion, my dear boy. I haven't seen enough of it, you know, to venture to express me sentiments. I think you said you were in Wall Stweet."

"Yes; Sloan and I are in business down there. Here is our card."

"Thanks. 'Swift & Sloan, bwokers,'" he read. "Stock bwokers; I pwesume?"

"Yes."

"Members of the Exchange?"

"No. Not old enough for that yet."

"Haw! May I awsk if you buy bonds—Amewican bonds, I mean?"

"Sure. We buy and sell anything in our line."

"I have some Amewican bonds that I bwrought over to sell. Pewhaps you could dispose of them for me."

"Railroad bonds?"

"Ya-as. I cawn't wemember the name at 'wesent."

"They're in me twunk. I'll bwing them to your office and you can look at them."

"All right. Fetch them down. We can sell them at the market."

"Ya-as, I pwesume so. Talking about the countwy at the table weminded me of the bonds."

"How is that?" asked Dick.

"I bought them in the countwy," replied the Englishman, with his customary vacuous look. "In Surwey. I was invited to spend a week with me fwiend, Mountjoy, at his place to shoot thnipe."

"Shoot snipe?" said Dick.

"Ya-as. Howid, difficult thing thnipe-shooting, don't you know. They don't fly stwaight like any wational bird ought to fly. They dodge about, and it takes a week to hit one. That weminds me of a good stowy Mountjoy told me about a thnipe a fwiend of his had down in Cambridge-shire," and the Englishman chuckled. "Mountjoy's fwiend had a fwiend down to his place to shoot thnipe. First day they go out Mountjoy's fwiend's fwiend fires at a thnipe in the water meadow and kills him. Upon which Mountjoy's fwiend gets vewy mad and thwears. 'Why,' said he, 'if you haven't shot the thnipe that has amused me the whole year.' Vewy clever, don't you think?" and the Englishman chuckled again.

Neither Dick nor Tom laughed at what he called an amusing story.

They didn't quite see the point of it.

"The stowy was so funny, 'pon my honor, that I bought the Amewican bonds from him when he awsked me if I would take them."

"Very accomodating on your part, Mr. Hawtree," said Dick.

"Ya-as, I always like to oblige me fwiends."

"Well, bring the bonds down to our office and we'll sell them for you."

"Thanks. Vewy kind of you, I am sure. Now I think I will go, as I have an engagement at the Waldorf."

The Englishman got up in a leisurely way and started for the door.

"Good evening, dear boys. I will see you at bweakfast, pwobably."

"Good-by, Mr. Hawtree. Drop in again."

"Thanks, awfully."

He opened the door and passed out.

"What do you think of him, Dick?" asked Tom.

"What do I think of him, dear boy," chuckled Dick.

"Haw! I think he's a first-class fake. I don't believe he'll ever call at the office with any bonds."

"Don't you?" replied his chum. "I do."

"Why, do you think he's a real Englishman and has bonds for sale?"

"No, I don't think he's an Englishman, but I think he has bonds for sale just the same—bonds that we'd better not handle if we don't want to get into trouble."

"Do you think there is anything crooked about him?"

"Well, a man who will assume a disguise that I am confident he has put on, does not do it for an honest purpose. leave it to yourself."

"There is something in that of course."

"There is more in it, I'll bet, than we have any idea of. He may be a crook for all we know. He has sized us up

as young and inexperienced. If he has stolen bonds in his possession it probably has struck him that it will be safer to get us to handle them for him than a broker who is up to snuff. See the point?"

"Yes; but it doesn't follow that your suspicions are right."

"Maybe not; but we can't afford to take any chances."

"That's true," admitted Dick, pacing up and down the room.

The boys talked of little else save the Englishman that night.

They had no absolute knowledge that he wasn't what he claimed to be, but the more they figured on the matter the more certain they became that he wasn't to be trusted.

Next morning promptly at half-past nine the two college chums were at their desks in their office in the Cotton Building.

Dick began to study the stock market report of the preceding day, while Tom employed his time reading the Wall Street papers which the young firm subscribed for and which were delivered at their office by carriers.

"Say, Tom," said Dick at length.

"Well," replied his partner.

"A. & C., which attracted our attention a few days ago, was uncommonly lively yesterday. Some thirty thousand shares changed hands, and the price has advanced two points. What do you say to our buying 100 shares of it. We've got to do something to make expenses till we get customers."

"Whatever you say goes with me."

"All right. We'll go long on 100 and see how we come out."

"What is A. & C. ruling at?"

"Eighty-five."

"Going to buy on margin, aren't you?"

"Yes."

"Where are you going to place the order?"

"I think I'll go to that little banking and brokerage house on Nassau Street. I can watch the quotations there as they are put up on the blackboard, and if for any reason I should consider it advisable to make a quick sale I'll be on the spot to do so."

"I'll stay here while you're away, though I hardly think we shall have any callers," said Tom, as Dick put on his hat and then opened the safe to get the \$1,000 necessary to put the deal through.

After Dick went out Tom continued to read the Wall Street news and to blue pencil a paragraph here and there for his partner's inspection later on.

About eleven o'clock the door opened and Hawtree the Englishman appeared.

"Good morning, Mr. Hawtree, take a seat," said Tom, motioning to a chair beside his desk.

"Haw!" exclaimed the Britisher, fondling his whiskers and looking around the office. "So this is your den, my dear fellow?"

"Yes, sir; this is the office of Swift & Sloan."

"Haw! Vewy snug place, upon me honor. Pawdon me, but what kind of a machine is that in the glawss case. It makes a howid monotonous noise, don't you know, and there is some kind of a paper coming out of it."

"That's a ticker," replied Tom, dryly.

"Indeed! What a wediculous name. Might I awsk what it is for?"

"It reports the operations of the stock market as fast as they take place."

"Haw! Weports the opewations of the stock market." The Englishman picked up the tape and looked at the hieroglyphics that were stamped on it by the mechanism of the apparatus.

"I cawn't read the thing to save me life," he said.

"It's very simple when you have once got the hang of it. Now you see that quotation—1,000 B. & O. 112?"

"Ya-as."

"That means 1,000 shares of Baltimore & Ohio railroad stock has been sold for \$112 a share. It marks the ruling price of the stock at the moment of the sale."

"Haw! That weminds me that the bonds I bwrought down for you to sell for me are of that woad—Baltimore & Ohio. Pewhaps you'll be able to tell me how much they are worth."

"Certainly. Let me see the bonds, please."

The Englishman took an envelope out of his pocket and handed it to Tom.

The young broker opened it and took out five bonds.

They proved to be \$1,000 First Mortgage coupon fives—gilt-edged negotiable securities.

Tom took a printed paper out of a pigeon-hole in his desk.

This showed the latest market value of all bonds on the market.

Looking up the Baltimore & Ohio First Mortgage fives he found them quoted at 106, which showed that the \$1,000 bonds were worth \$1,060 each.

"Your five bonds are worth \$5,300, Mr. Hawtree," he said.

"Ya-as," drawled the Englishman.

"You want to leave them with us to be sold, is that the idea?"

"Ya-as."

Tom drew up an order to that effect, specifying the name, numbers and character of the bonds and asked Hawtree to sign it.

The visitor signed his name "Charles Hawtree" in full in a lazy way, as if the effort bored him.

"Will it take long for you to waise the money on them?" he said.

"Not very long if they're all right," replied Tom. "You say you bought them in England?"

"Ya-as; of me fwiend Mountjoy. Clevah fellow, Mountjoy. That weminds me of another stowy of his—capital stowy. He and a fwiend went out fishing in a punt with a large hamper of luncheon, to keep it steady, I suppose, and an old keeper, to do the wowing, who took too much beer, to make it unsteady, which was widiculous, you know. They were out about an hour when Mountjoy's fwiend got a bite and pulled in a gweat monster of a perch, howid cweature, with wed gold fins, stawing eyes, a wet flabby tail, and a back that was a wegular fan of pwickles. Just as he was pulling the fish into the punt——"

At that interesting point in the Englishman's story the office door opened and a sharp-looking, hatchet-faced man, in a tweed suit, stepped into the room.

Hawtree paused abruptly on seeing him, jumped to his feet and shoved his hand into his hip pocket.

"It won't do, Jem Dalton," said the newcomer in a quiet, incisive tone, flashing a revolver in one hand and a pair of handcuffs in the other; "the game is up. Hold out your hands for the bracelets. You've given me a lot of trouble, but I've got you at last."

CHAPTER V.

A RESOURCEFUL RASCAL.

Tom Sloan gave a gasp as he took in the situation, for he never was so astonished in his life.

Jem Dalton, alias Hawtree, was apparently cornered by an English sleuth from Scotland Yard, London, who had traced the crook across the ocean.

Dalton's action in springing up the moment the hatchet-faced man entered the office showed that he recognized the detective and understood his purpose.

His hand had slipped to his hip pocket, but the detective was a shade quicker in getting out his gun, so Dalton realized that it was as much as his life was worth to pull his weapon.

He was a resourceful scoundrel, however, and desperate as his position was he did not give up all hope of making his escape.

"Hold out your hands," commanded the detective, keeping his revolver leveled.

Reluctantly the rascal obeyed.

The officer snapped one of the handcuffs on Dalton's right wrist, and was in the act of repeating the movement with the other, when the crook suddenly threw up his left arm, brushed the muzzle of the revolver aside, and then struck the detective a terrible blow in the face with his manacled fist.

The sleuth's finger was on the trigger of his weapon when the crook struck up his arm, and the revolver went off, the ball barely missing its mark.

As Dalton made a dash for the door, Tom sprang up and cut off his retreat.

"Out of my way!" cried the crook fiercely, grabbing the young broker and trying to swing him around out of his path.

Tom not only stood his ground, but springing an old college foot trick upon the man, landed him on the floor and jumped astride of him.

The report of the revolver startled the passersby in the corridor, as well as the other tenants on the floor, and considerable excitement ensued.

Brokers, with their clerks and customers, rushed into the corridor to find out the cause of the shooting.

While they were trying to locate the office whence the shot had come, Tom was engaged in a desperate struggle with the English crook for the mastery.

The detective was badly stunned by the force of the rascal's blow, and he lay on the floor too dazed to come to Tom's assistance.

"Let me up or it'll be the worse for you," hissed the crook.

His dialect was gone now.

"Not much. You are evidently a crook wanted by that

detective, and I'm going to hold on to you till he is able to take charge of you himself," replied Tom, resolutely.

Dalton saw that the boy meant what he said, so he said nothing more, but bent all his energies toward trying to reverse the situation.

Tom had him by the wrists, with his knees dug into his sides, and his agility counterbalanced the crook's superior strength, but it was impossible for the boy to overcome him.

The young broker could only hope to hold on to him until the reviving officer was able to take a hand in securing his man.

At that point somebody opened the door and looked in. It was the cashier from next door.

When his gaze took in the scene in the room he uttered an exclamation that brought a rush of persons to the door.

As these outsiders began to crowd into the office, Dalton, summoning all his strength into a desperate effort to get free, suddenly threw him over, tore one of his wrists free and smashed the plucky boy in the face.

That caused Tom to let go of the other.

The crook jumped up and made a dash into the crowd with such force that he carried all before him.

Before any of the spectators got an inkling of the true state of affairs he was dashing along the corridor toward the rear exit stairs, with the half of the handcuff in his hand.

Tom sprang up and ran after him, but the mob hindered him so that Dalton was out of sight by the time he got into the corridor.

He ran to the elevator, and not seeing the crook supposed he had taken to the regular staircase.

He jumped into the first descending cage that came along and went down, hoping to cut the rascal off before he got to the main exit.

He was disappointed, of course, for by that time the crook was stepping out into Pine Street at the back of the building.

The rascal stopped in a neighboring doorway just long enough to wrap his handkerchief well around the handcuffs, so as to hide them from public gaze, and then hurried down William Street.

He kept on till he reached a Third Avenue elevated station where he caught a train that carried him uptown.

In the meantime Tom, disappointed in overhauling the crook, returned to his office where he found the crowd still congregated.

The detective had recovered and was explaining matters to a couple of brokers.

He was deeply chagrined over the escape of the rascal he thought he had effectually cornered.

Tom, after clearing the office of the crowd, told him he had done the best he could to prevent the fellow from getting away, but he had proved too much for him.

"I rushed downstairs thinking to catch him before he could get out of the building," he said, "but it amounted to nothing. As none of the elevator men took him down I am now convinced that he made his escape by way of the back stairs into Pine Street. He is out of the neighborhood by this time."

"I shadowed the rascal to this building and thought I had him dead," said the English sleuth; "but he proved to be slicker than any chap I have ever been up against. This

slip-up will give me a black eye at headquarters unless I can get my man and recover the bonds he has in his possession."

"Don't worry about the bonds. I've got some if not all of them," replied Tom, after a glance at his desk where the securities lay in full view.

"You have!" cried the detective in surprise.

"Yes. The fellow brought the bonds here for us to sell for him. That was the object of his visit."

"And I suppose you would have sold them and turned the price over to him if I had not appeared?"

"I don't think so, as my partner and I both had our suspicions of him. It was my intention to hold the man off till we had made an investigation into the bonds."

"Where are the bonds?"

"The ones to which I refer are lying on my desk. Have you a description of them?"

"I have," replied the officer, taking out his pocketbook and producing a paper.

The five Baltimore & Ohio Railroad bonds proved to be only a portion of the swag that Dalton had stolen from a country house in Staffordshire, England.

Tom gave them to the sleuth, taking his receipt for them.

He then surprised the detective by telling him that Dalton, under the assumed name of Charles Hawtree, had been stopping at his boarding-house on 35th Street for about a week.

"That was where my partner and I got acquainted with him," went on Tom.

The young broker then went on to describe how cleverly Dalton had impersonated an English swell, and had deceived everybody in the house but himself and his partner.

He told of the interview they had held with the bogus Hawtree in their room the evening before, and how it was evident that the disguised crook had visited them in order to pave the way toward getting them to dispose of the Baltimore & Ohio bonds.

"No doubt he figured that we were easy, and that if we sold the first batch without trouble, he would try to push the rest off through us. The fact that the securities were stolen in England, and that they were negotiable on sight, made things much easier for him," said Tom.

"That is true," nodded the detective. "It is something to get even a part of the stolen property back. I thank you for the help you gave me in trying to capture that rascal, and it is hard luck that our united efforts failed to land him. However, I'll get him yet. I have never yet failed to capture my man."

The detective arose, shook hands with the young broker and took his leave.

Shortly afterward Dick came walking in.

"I bought the 100 shares at 85 and it's now up two points," he said in a tone of satisfaction as he took his seat at his desk.

"Glad to hear it," replied Tom.

"Been lonesome?" asked Dick, as he took up one of the Wall Street papers his partner had placed on his desk.

"Hardly," replied Tom, in a dry tone.

"Any visitors?"

"I should say so. I had a bunch of them."

"A bunch!" exclaimed Dick, curiously.

"Yes, quite a mob. You missed a whole lot by being away."

"What did I miss?"

"The satisfaction of helping me catch a desperate crook."

"Say, what are you giving me, Tom?"

"Nothing but facts. Who do you suppose the crook was?"

"Do you really mean to say you had a run-in with a crook in this office while I was out?"

"I certainly did. There was quite a strenuous time in here for five or six minutes and that bullet hole in the wall is a slight evidence of the fact."

Tom pointed to the perforation made by the ball from the detective's revolver.

Dick got up and examined the hole.

"The report of the revolver is what brought the crowd in here," said Tom.

"Gee! That looks as if somebody meant business," said Dick. "Let's hear what happened."

"To begin with, I had a visit from Hawtree," began Tom.

"That so?"

"Yes; he brought five Baltimore & Ohio First Mortgage \$1,000 fives with him for us to sell. There's the order I drew up for him to sign, with his signature, Charles Hawtree, attached."

"You have the bonds, then?"

"No. They are now in the custody of a Scotland Yard detective named John Hawkins, who told me they were stolen, with other property, from an English country house in Staffordshire."

"The dickens you say! Then this Hawtree is——"

"A notorious English crook named Jem Dalton."

"Whew!" whistled Dick.

Tom then went on to tell his partner that while the bogus Hawtree was in the middle of a presumedlly funny fish story the door opened and the detective came in.

"Hawtree jumped up in an instant and shoved his hand to his hip, but the detective got the drop on him first with his own gun and the crook apparently hadn't the ghost of a show," went on Tom.

"So he was pinched, and is in the Tombs by this time, I suppose," said Dick.

"No, he wasn't pinched in spite of the fact that the detective had him dead to rights," replied Tom, who then went on to explain how Dalton turned the tables on the officer. "That bullet in the wall came from the detective's revolver."

Tom described how he had jumped in and tried to keep the crook from making his escape, and how, in the end, he had failed.

"Then the rascal got away?" said Dick.

"That's what he did, with one handcuff on," answered Tom.

"I suppose the affair will be in the newspapers, and we'll be forced into the limelight again. It will be a big surprise for Mrs. Atkins and her boarders to learn the true character of the man who posed as a London swell on a visit to this country. Well, he worked the deception pretty cleverly. He brought that 'Haw!' out as natural as life, while his chuckle was something unique."

"He will have to adopt some other kind of disguise now.

In my opinion he is a pretty dangerous man. I wouldn't care to take the contract to capture him."

"Too bad I wasn't on hand. The both of us would have held him till the detective recovered from his knockout. Well, we have no cause to worry over the matter—that's up to the detective. Ready to go out to lunch?"

"Yes," replied Tom, reaching for his hat.

They locked up the office and went to a Broadway restaurant.

CHAPTER VI.

A VISIT FROM BROKER GRAFTON.

When the boys got back to the office they found a reporter of an afternoon paper waiting to see Tom about the incident at the office.

He had heard about it from one of the persons whom the report of the revolver had drawn to the office and he wanted the facts for his paper.

Tom gave them to him.

"Say, didn't you and your partner here figure in that hold-up affair on the Reading turnpike in New Jersey?" he inquired, as he put up his notebook.

"Yes, we practically captured the four scamps between us," replied Tom.

"Too bad you were not successful in holding this English crook to-day."

"Yes, it is too bad. When a man can lay out a sharp detective that has the drop on him with a cocked revolver, you must admit he is something out of the ordinary to handle."

"That's so," replied the reporter. "I guess he's a hard proposition."

"You can gamble on it that he is," replied Tom.

The reporter then took his departure.

The young brokers walked over to the ticker to see how A. & C. was doing.

They found it had gone up another point.

"That puts us about \$300 to the good," said Tom.

"Yes."

"How high do you think it will go?"

"I don't believe anybody can answer that question. I think I will run up to the little bank and keep tab on it there," said Dick.

Soon after he went away the door opened and the broker from the adjoining office walked in.

He introduced himself as Thomas Grafton.

He was a man of perhaps fifty, and wore a heavy chin beard.

He had a kind of snaky-black eye that was never still.

"I heard you had some kind of shooting scrape in here about noon, and I thought I would drop in and ask you about it. I was at the Exchange at the time and did not hear about it till I returned a while ago," said the visitor.

Tom obliged him with the particulars in a few words.

"That fellow was a pretty hard rascal, I guess."

"Yes, about as tough as they come," answered the boy.

"By the way, didn't I see something in the paper last evening about you and your partner saving Broker Pratt from being robbed of \$50,000 somewhere in New Jersey?"

"I presume you did if you read the evening edition of any of the dailies."

"Then you and your partner were the persons mentioned?"

"Yes."

"You captured the men who dynamited Mr. Pratt's automobile?"

"We did."

"You appear to be nervy boys."

Tom smiled, but made no answer.

"You boys have just started out as brokers, eh?"

"We have."

"Doing any business?"

"A little," replied Tom, evasively.

"Speculating on your own account?"

"Perhaps."

"What stock are you interested in?"

Tom began to think that their next door neighbor was pretty inquisitive.

"I would prefer not to say just what stock we are handling," he said.

"Hum! Well, I was going to say that I could put you on to a good thing."

"Indeed?"

"Yes. I suppose you have noticed that the copper properties are pretty lively at present. They are the best things on the Curb just now. Now I would recommend you to purchase North Union Copper. It's a new mine, and is going cheap, but it is bound to go up several hundred per cent. within the next six months. I have inside information as to its prospects and can guarantee that you'll make money if you get in on it."

"Are you selling it?" asked Tom, suspecting that Broker Grafton's object in recommending the stock to his notice was a sly attempt to unload some of it on him and his partner.

"Selling it!" exclaimed Grafton. "I should say not. I'm buying, not selling. I wouldn't have called your attention to it if I didn't think it was one of the best investments to-day in the Street."

Grafton flashed his snaky eye on Tom, but only for a moment.

He was one of those men who couldn't look one square in the face.

"Then you are loading up on it yourself?" said the boy.

"I certainly am," replied the broker, promptly, "and I would advise you and your partner to buy as much of it as you can afford. It's going at \$2, but it never will be as low as that again."

Tom was a bit puzzled at the broker's apparent honesty in tipping him off to such a good thing as he alleged North Union Copper to be.

"I'll talk the matter over with my partner," he said.

"Do so; but don't lose any time getting in on it."

"Is there much of it on the market?"

"No; the knowing ones have gobbled most of it up. But there are a few thousand shares floating around. If you hear of any buy them. If you don't want the stock yourself fetch it in to me and I'll take it off your hands at a slight advance on what you pay for it."

"Will you give me an order to that effect?" said Tom, wishing to be on the safe side.

"It isn't necessary," replied Grafton, loftily. "My word is good for it."

"How many shares do you want?"

"All you can get, but you'd be foolish to turn it over to me. I am giving you the tip because you are just starting out for yourselves and I want to give you a lift. I have a friendly feeling for young men like you and your partner. I was young once myself and had a hard struggle to get a start, so you see I naturally sympathize with others in the same boat."

Broker Grafton tried to look as if he was fairly bubbling over with the milk of human kindness, but somehow he didn't succeed very well.

His face was rather against him.

It wasn't a face that was calculated to inspire unlimited confidence.

He might have claimed that he wasn't responsible for his face, since it was nature's handiwork and not his own; nevertheless, a man's countenance is a pretty sure index of his character.

At any rate Tom did not like Broker Grafton's face, and he couldn't help wondering if the broker didn't have some object in handing out his tip on North Union Copper.

However, he felt obliged, if only on the score of politeness, to thank the broker for the interest he claimed to take in him and Dick.

"Well, I must be going, young man," said Grafton, after looking at his watch. "Drop in and see me some time. As we are near neighbors we musn't stand on ceremony."

Tom said he would do so and then the visitor got up and left.

Dick returned about quarter past three.

"I had a call from Broker Grafton whose office is next door," said Tom.

"What did he want?"

"He came in to get the particulars about the trouble this morning and introduced himself to me. Then he branched off on copper stocks. He told me that he had inside information about North Union Copper, and advised us to buy as much of it as we could afford, for he said it was sure to go up several hundred per cent. higher inside of six months."

"Very kind of him," laughed Dick. "Did he offer to accommodate us with a few hundred shares?"

"No; he said he was buying and not selling, and offered to take any North Union Copper that we might pick up off our hands at a slight advance."

"Then we must try and pick some up. Did he give you a written order?"

"No. He said his word was as good as an order."

"Maybe it is, but that isn't the way we do business. Suppose we bought 500 or 1,000 shares of the stock and took them in to him he might repudiate his verbal order and then we'd be left with the stock on our hands. No; anybody who wants us to buy stock for them must come up with a written order, so we'll know where we're at."

"He said that the reason he tipped me off to buy North Union Copper was because he has a very friendly feeling for us."

"That's something new in Wall Street—to have a friendly feeling for one's neighbors in the same line of business. He was giving you tally, Tom."

"I imagine he has a small grindstone up his sleeve that he would like us to turn for him."

"Well, we are not turning grindstones for other people if we can help it. It will take all our energy to turn our own grindstone."

Dick then said that A. & C. had closed at 88½, and it looked as if it would go higher next day.

"Our first speculation seems to be turning out pretty well," said Tom.

"Yes, it's doing even better than I expected. Well, it's quarter of four. Shall we shut up shop for the day?"

"Might as well, for we are not likely to make anything by staying here."

So the boys put on their hats and started for their boarding-house.

CHAPTER VII.

BUSINESS BEGINS TO BOOM WITH SWIFT & SLOAN.

As Dick and Tom entered the house they met the wife of the commercial traveler coming out of the parlor with Miss Wallace, the budding prima donna.

"Good afternoon, ladies," said Dick, politely.

The ladies acknowledged the salute and paused to have a short chat with the boys.

"We have news for you," said Miss Wallace, presently.

"Yes?" replied Dick.

"We have lost our most distinguished boarder, Mr. Hawtree."

Dick looked at Tom and laughed.

"When he came in to lunch he informed us that he had received a cable message from his brother requesting him to go to St. Louis at once to transact some important business for him, and he was going to take the three o'clock train west."

"He told you that, did he?" said Dick.

"Yes. And he's gone, for he sent for his trunk about two. I am sure we shall miss him at the table. He was quite too funny for anything."

"Yes, he was a pretty good actor," replied Dick, dryly.

"Actor!" exclaimed Miss Wallace. "What do you mean? It seems wonderful how he manages to get along with such little brains."

"I'm sorry to be obliged to treat you to an unpleasant surprise in connection with this man who has been masquerading here as Charles Hawtree," said Dick, "but you're bound to learn it from the newspaper if not from me. The fellow is not an English swell at all, but a London crook named Jem Dalton."

Both ladies almost screamed at Dick's words.

"You don't mean it," cried Miss Wallace.

"I certainly do mean it. He called at our office to-day to get us to sell some bonds he had stolen in England. He was spotted by a London detective sent to this country to capture him. The officer followed him into our office intending to arrest him. What happened then Sloan can tell you better than I, for he was present and I wasn't."

The ladies looked inquiringly at Tom, and so the young broker gave them an account of the lively episode at the office.

"But he was here to lunch at half-past twelve, looking

the same as ever, and I am sure he did not have anything like a handcuff on one of his wrists," said Miss Wallace.

"You'd hardly expect him to exhibit such a badge of crime in public. He got rid of it somehow before he returned to the house. I am rather astonished at the nerve he showed in coming back after his exposure downtown; but then he probably figured that you ladies would not learn the truth till late in the afternoon."

"Well, well," said Miss Wallace, "this is certainly a surprise and not an agreeable one. Mamma will be horrified to think that we have been on social terms with a common thief. I don't know what Mrs. Atkins will say when she learns that she took such a person in as a boarder. She is so particular, too."

"She can hardly be held accountable for the mistake. This fellow is an artist in disguising himself. His impersonation of a London swell was decidedly clever, though Sloan and I thought it was a bit overdrawn. We had begun to entertain a strong suspicion that he was not what he assumed to be, so his exposure was not a great surprise to us," said Dick.

The sensation at the dinner table that evening was the unmasking of Hawtree, who had completely deceived everybody but the young brokers.

One of the papers had an account of the incident at the office, but none of the boarders saw it until the story appeared in the morning edition.

Next morning as Dick was on the point of starting for the little bank to watch the developments in A. & C. the door opened and Banker Pratt walked in.

"How do you do, Mr. Pratt?" said Dick. "Take a seat."

"You have quite a nice little office," replied the banker, sitting down.

"It's good enough to make a start in," said Tom.

"How are you boys getting on?"

"We're not getting on to any great extent as yet," said Dick. "We have yet to make the acquaintance of our first customer. However, we have a little private deal on that seems to be panning out pretty well. If it helps to pay our expenses we will be quite satisfied. By the way, do you know anything about a copper mine called the North Union?"

"Can't say that I ever heard of it," replied the banker.

"Broker Grafton, our next door neighbor on the right, was in here yesterday afternoon talking to Sloan. He said we couldn't do better than to buy as much of the stock as we could afford. It's ruling at \$2 a share on the Curb, and, according to his statement, is so scarce that it's hard to get. Whether that is really so or not I'll find out to-day by making inquiries of the mining traders."

"Well, my young friends, I called mainly to put a little business in your way," said Mr. Pratt.

"We're very much obliged to you, I am sure," said Tom.

"Don't mention it. I am under considerable obligation to you both for saving me that \$50,000, and I don't know any better way of showing my appreciation of your services than to give you a commission to execute for me. I will be your first customer, and I hope that will not only start the ball rolling with you but keep it rolling."

"What is the commission, Mr. Pratt?" asked Dick.

"I want you to go around among the brokers and buy as much Roanoke Short Line Railway stock as you can

find. It is ruling at 40, and rather weak at that, so you ought to get it at the market. I authorize you to give 40½ if necessary. Have the shares that you purchase delivered C. O. D. at my bank."

"All right, sir. Draw up an order to that effect, Tom, for Mr. Pratt to sign," said Dick.

Tom did so and the banker affixed his signature to it.

"That is all I guess," he said, rising. "Drop around and see me at any time. I shall be glad to see you."

The boys said they would and Mr. Pratt departed.

"We've got one customer at any rate," said Dick, in a tone of satisfaction. "You'd better attend to that matter, Tom, as I want to look after A. & C."

"All right. It won't make much difference for the office to be locked up for an hour or two, for we're not likely to have any visitors," replied Tom.

Tom reached for his hat when a knock came at the door.

"Come in," sang out Dick.

The door opened and a tall, puritanical looking man stood before them.

He had all the earmarks of a clergyman.

"I called to see Mr. Swift or Mr. Sloan," he said, in a solemn tone.

"I am Mr. Swift," said Dick. "Take a seat and let me know how I can serve you, sir," and the young broker pointed to the chair beside his desk.

"Permit me to introduce myself," said the visitor, seating himself and then handing Dick a visiting card.

"Rev. Edward Torrens," said Dick, glancing at the card.

The reverend gentleman bowed slightly.

"I was referred to you by Miss Dorothy Wallace, of No. — West 35th Street. She and her mother are communicants at my church."

Dick bowed.

Miss Wallace was the budding nightingale who lived at his boarding-house.

"I have some bonds of the Southern Railways Co., which I have had in my possession some time. They were left to me by a deceased relative. I desire to sell them, as I have a more profitable investment for my money in view. Happening to speak about the matter to Miss Wallace, she advised me to call on you, as you were regular brokers in Wall Street."

"We are much indebted to Miss Wallace for recommending us to your attention," said Dick.

"She is a very charming young lady, and I saw no reason why I should not let you sell the bonds for me as well as any other brokerage house," said the visitor, in the same solemn, measured tones.

"We can do it as well as any other broker. You have brought the securities with you, I presume?"

"I have."

The Rev. Mr. Torrens produced an envelope from his pocket, took six bonds from it and laid them on Dick's desk.

The young broker examined them carefully and was satisfied they were all right.

They were \$1,000 bonds, numbered consecutively, and were known as First Mortgage fives, Issue C, running for thirty years.

Dick pulled out his printed bond list and found that their present market value was \$1,045 each.

He pointed the figures out to his new customer.

"What is your charge for selling them?" asked the Rev. Mr. Torrens.

Dick told him what his commission would be, and the minister nodded.

The boy then drew up an order for their sale and pushed it toward his visitor to sign.

He affixed his signature in a large bold hand.

"How long will it take you to sell them, Mr. Swift?" he inquired.

"Not long. These are good securities and command a ready market. If you will drop in around three o'clock it is likely I will have your money ready for you."

"Very well," replied the reverend gentleman with a look of satisfaction in his eyes. "I will try and call about that hour, otherwise you will see me to-morrow."

He got up, bowed to Dick and walked out in a solemn and dignified way.

"It never rains but it pours, old man," said Tom, who had delayed his departure, in a joyous tone. "Two customers in one morning. That's a pretty good beginning. Our luck is beginning to turn in the right direction."

"It certainly is," replied Dick, replacing the bonds in the envelope, and placing it in his pocket.

"You dropped something, Dick," said Tom, as his partner rose from his desk. "Fell out of that envelope, I think."

Dick looked down at the rug and saw a small card.

He picked it up and looked at it.

The following was engraved on it in neat script letter:

REV. JOSEPH MURDEN,
The Elms, Bathgate, Staffordshire.

Dick stared at it in a sort of bewildered surprise.

The Rev. Joseph Murden was the person, according to the statement of the Scotland Yard detective, whose country house had been broken into by Jem Dalton, the crook, who then fled to America with his plunder.

CHAPTER VIII.

TRAPPED.

"This is mighty singular," said Dick, still gazing at the card.

"What is singular, old man?" asked Tom.

"This card—that it should be in that envelope."

"How so? Whose card is it?"

"Didn't you tell me that the detective told you yesterday that Jem Dalton, the crook, stole those B. & O. bonds, and other securities, from a country curate named Rev. Joseph Murden, of The Elms, Bathgate, Staffordshire?"

"Yes; that was the person Dalton robbed."

"Well, look at that card," said Dick, handing it to his partner.

Tom took it and glanced at it.

"Why, it's the same man," he said.

"It appears to be. Now the question is—how did that card come to be in that envelope? Is the Rev. Joseph Murden a friend of the Rev. Edward Torrens, our customer? Or is there something wrong about the Reverend Torrens?"

"What could there be wrong about him? He was referred to us by Miss Wallace, who attends his church."

"So he said; but was he?"

"You can easily prove it if you think it advisable to take the time to run up to the house and interview the young lady."

"I think I had better. The bonds the reverend gentleman left with us for sale represent a matter of \$6,270. That's quite a sum. If he should prove to be a fraud——"

"A fraud!"

"Well, suppose he was Jem Dalton himself in another disguise? That rascal has already shown that he is extremely clever at hiding his identity under false colors. Come to think of it, the reverend gentleman was just the height and general build of Dalton."

"That's true, but Dalton would hardly have the nerve to call on us so soon again after his exposure yesterday and try to get us to dispose of another batch of his stolen securities," said Tom.

"That fellow has nerve to do anything, Tom. The very reason why he would not be suspected of attempting such a bold move may have induced him to risk it. It is the man who takes a desperate chance who often succeeds in winning out."

"You may be right in your surmise, Dick. If our reverend customer should really turn out to be Jem Dalton I'll give the fellow credit for cast-iron nerve. You'd better lose no time in investigating the matter as far as you can before you make any move to sell those bonds. It's too bad that we don't know where we could connect with that English detective. He'd be just the man to look into this matter, for he probably is well acquainted with Dalton's methods."

"Telephone to Police Headquarters and see if they know where he can be found," said Dick.

Tom went to the 'phone and connected with headquarters.

The man who answered him could give him no information about the English sleuth, so he had to give it up.

"Well, I'll start uptown now and see Miss Wallace, and you go and attend to Mr. Pratt's order. Give that your whole attention, for it behooves us to show the gentleman that we can do his business as well as any other brokers," said Dick.

In less than an hour Dick walked into the boarding-house and knocked at the door of the room occupied by Mrs. Wallace and her daughter.

Mrs. Wallace came to the door and was rather surprised to see Dick.

"Is Miss Wallace in?" asked the young broker.

"No. She is at the Conservatory taking her singing lesson," was the answer.

"Do you expect her back soon?"

"Not for at least an hour."

"I wanted to see her on particular business. Perhaps you might enlighten me a little on the matter that brought me up. May I ask what church you attend?"

Mrs. Wallace invited Dick to step in and sit down, and then she mentioned the name of the church she and her daughter attended.

"Is the pastor's name the Rev. Edward Torrens?"

"Yes."

"What kind of looking man is he?"

Her description tallied fairly well with the customer who had called at the office that morning.

Dick then explained that a man had called at his office about half-past ten and represented himself as the Rev. Edward Torrens.

"He brought six railroad bonds, worth something over \$6,000, which he wanted to sell, and said that your daughter referred him to our office. In accepting an order to sell bonds for any one it is customary for a broker to be reasonably assured that the party offering securities for sale is doing so in good faith. Owing to the fact that an effort was made yesterday to impose on us by an uncommonly clever rascal I deemed it wise to find out if Miss Wallace actually did refer her minister to us."

"I really couldn't tell you, Mr. Swift," said Mrs. Wallace. "It is quite possible that she might have done so. Knowing that you and Mr. Sloan are Wall Street brokers, for she would be glad to put a customer in your way. I'll give you the address of the Conservatory. It's on 23d Street. You could ride down there and see her."

"Very well. I will do that," said Dick.

He left the house a few minutes later with the address in his pocket.

Reaching the Conservatory he inquired for Miss Wallace, and to his disappointment learned that she had left only a few minutes before.

"What will I do now—go back and wait for her at the house?" he asked himself.

While he was considering the matter it suddenly struck him that it would not be a bad idea to call at the rectory of the church and satisfy himself that his customer was the real Simon-pure minister of the church.

"I can fake up some excuse for my visit in case I find that the two men are identical," he told himself.

So he took a car and went uptown again.

He found the church without difficulty and the minister's residence was a part of the edifice on one side.

Ringling the bell he inquired for the Rev. Edward Torrens.

Another disappointment awaited him, for the reverend gentleman was not in, and the servant didn't know when he would be at home.

So Dick walked away as much at a loss as ever.

It was half-past twelve now, so the young broker decided to go back to the boarding-house and see if Miss Wallace had returned, since it was near lunch hour.

He was about to cross Broadway, about a block from the minister's house, when a cab dashed close up to the curb, compelling him to step back.

The door opened and to his astonishment he saw the Rev. Edward Torrens looking at him.

"You called at my residence just now, Mr. Swift," he said, in his solemn tones. "Did you wish to see me with reference to those bonds I left at your office?"

Dick, taken at some disadvantage, did not know what answer to make.

The excuse he had framed up had slipped his mind for the moment, and he was rather at a loss for a fitting explanation.

While he hesitated, the reverend gentleman said:

"Step in, for I'm in a hurry. We can talk as we ride up the street."

He reached his arm out and grasping Dick by the shoulder drew him into the cab and slammed the door.

The driver at once started on, crossing Broadway and continuing on down the side street.

"I am on a sick call," said the Rev. Mr. Torrens, throwing his left arm behind the young broker's head, as if to rest it, and then taking from his pocket a handkerchief bunched up. "It is an urgent case," he continued, "which accounts for my hurry. My gracious, what is that?" he exclaimed, pointing out of the window with the hand that held the handkerchief.

Dick turned his head to look.

The moment he did so, the gentleman gripped his head with his left arm, pulled it back and then clasped the handkerchief over his mouth and nose.

Dick, suddenly realizing that he had fallen into a trap, began to struggle to free himself.

He was a strong, athletic young fellow, and it took a powerful man to handle him; but in this instance the man who had him in his grasp seemed to have the strength of a Hercules, and moreover he was terribly handicapped by the handkerchief, which was saturated with some kind of a drug.

The result was his best efforts availed him nothing, and he soon began to lose his senses and drift away into the realms of forgetfulness.

At last he ceased to move and the man removed the handkerchief and thrust it into his pocket.

He then dropped one of the cab windows to admit air, after propping the young broker into a natural position, for he felt dizzy himself, having inhaled some of the fumes of the drug.

The cab continued to roll down the street, passing Sixth and the succeeding avenues in succession until it reached Tenth Avenue, up which the driver turned without receiving any instruction from his fare, showing that he had got his instructions in advance.

The vehicle went as far north as 41st Street, and then turned down that street toward the river.

In a few minutes it was within the confines of a notorious tough district.

It rolled up to the curb and stopped before a certain house in the middle of the block.

The man opened the door and looked out.

He glanced sharply up and down both sides of the street.

There were rough-looking men, slatternly appearing women, and dirty, unkempt children aplenty, but he took no notice of them.

What he was on the lookout for did not appear to be in sight, and he uttered a slight exclamation of satisfaction.

"Not a crusher in sight," he muttered in a tone that Detective Hawkins would have recognized as belonging to the slippery Jem Dalton.

We may as well remark that the English criminal classes call the police officers, detectives particularly, "crushers."

He motioned to the driver to come down.

"I want you to help me carry this lad into that house," he said. "He's been taking a drop too much and isn't able to walk."

The driver winked his eye, as if he understood what was

the matter with the boy, and, without saying a word, he assisted the bogus minister with Dick.

They bore him into a dirty-looking hallway, up two flights of creaky stairs, and into a small room furnished with a bed, a chair, a washstand, a few sporting pictures without frames, and a cheap, well-worn carpet.

"We'll put him on the bed and let him sleep his jag off," said the disguised Jem Dalton.

The English crook locked the door on the young broker and put the key in his pocket.

Then he handed the driver a \$5 bill and dismissed him.

CHAPTER IX.

IN WHICH THE TRAPPER IS TRAPPED.

In the meantime Tom Sloan went calling around among the brokers inquiring for Roanoke Short Line Railroad stock.

When he found a trader who had some of it he had no trouble in getting it at 40, for the demand for it was not very great.

He ordered all shares to be delivered C. O. D. at Mr. Pratt's bank, and as the banker was well known in Wall Street Tom had no difficulty in putting his deals through.

By two o'clock he had bought 20,000 shares, and then he stopped long enough to eat a sandwich and drink a cup of coffee in a quick lunch house.

If Mr. Pratt was willing to pay the regular one-eighth of one per cent. commission for buying then the firm of Swift & Sloan had made thus far \$1,250 on the order of their first customer, which was a very satisfactory profit.

Tom didn't forget to take a look at the A. & C. quotations in the various offices he visited, and he noted with satisfaction that it continued to rise.

It was now up to 92, and that represented a profit of nearly \$700.

Altogether things seemed to be coming their way at present, and that was a very pleasing reflection.

After eating his modest lunch, Tom started to look for more Roanoke Short Line.

When three o'clock came around he had annexed 2,000 more shares.

He still had an hour in which to do business and didn't propose to return to the office until he had secured all the stock he could find that day.

He supposed, of course, that Dick was dividing his attention between the office and the little bank on Nassau Street. As it was after three he would surely return to the office to stay until he (Tom) got back.

A man with a sandy complexion and reddish hair called and tried to get in the office soon after both the young brokers left around eleven.

The same man called again at half-past eleven and also at half-past twelve.

Indeed, he kept on calling at intervals up to quarter of four, after which he came no more.

On one of these visits he met the Rev. Edward Torrens, otherwise Jem Dalton, pacing up and down in front of the door.

That was about three o'clock.

Dalton went away after a while and came back at half-past three.

Finding the office still locked he went off again, but returned a few minutes before four, close upon Tom's heels.

Tom was somewhat surprised to find that his partner was not on hand, as he had no idea what business was keeping him out at that hour.

He had hardly taken off his hat and seated himself at his desk before the door opened and he saw the Rev. Edward Torrens walk in.

"Mr. Swift is not in, I perceive," said the visitor, solemnly.

"No, sir, but I expect him any moment. Take a seat," said Tom.

"You are his partner, I believe."

"Yes, sir."

"You are aware, of course, that I left some bonds of the Southern Railways Co. with Mr. Swift to be sold?"

"Yes, sir."

"Can you tell me if they have been sold?"

"I really couldn't tell you. My partner took charge of the matter as I was very busy all day with another branch of our business. I went out soon after you left this morning and I haven't seen my partner since, so I cannot say whether he sold the bonds or not."

"He told me that he could easily sell them, and said if I came in about three he thought he would have the money for me."

"Well, he ought to be in soon, so you won't have long to wait."

"If the bonds were not sold you'd probably have them in your safe, wouldn't you?"

"It is quite likely they would be there."

"As I am in a hurry to keep an engagement uptown perhaps you would look in your safe and let me know if they are there. In that case it will not be necessary for me to wait for Mr. Swift to come back."

Tom got up, went to the safe and rattled the combination.

The eyes of the disguised English crook were following his every movement.

As the young broker threw open the safe door, Dalton rose and sprang upon him like a panther.

Securing a strangle hold on the boy's neck he pulled out the same handkerchief with which he had doped Dick in the cab and pressed it over Tom's face.

Tom made a desperate effort to shake his aggressor off, but he was taken at such disadvantage that the crook had things all his own way.

In a minute or two he was quite dead to the world, and Dalton laid him upon the rug to one side.

He then locked the door, so that no one could get in and surprise him, and turned his attention to the safe.

The first thing he saw was the envelope containing the bonds he had left with the young firm for sale that morning and which Dick had placed in the safe before going uptown.

He thrust it into his pocket.

Something less than ten dollars in small bills and loose change lay in a tray and he appropriated that.

There was nothing else of value in sight.

He had no means of opening the inner steel door to a small compartment where the boys had \$1,000 in cash,

the balance of their limited capital being stowed away in a safe deposit box at the Washington vaults down the street.

Dalton was much disappointed at the bareness of the safe.

He came to the conclusion that the boy firm of brokers didn't amount to much and were operating more on bluff than anything else.

The only thing that gave him satisfaction was the recovery of the bonds which he had feared would be lost to him when he found that Dick had started out to investigate his identity.

He looked through both desks, but there was nothing in either that he could turn into money.

Leaving Tom lying on the floor he unlocked the door and passed out into the corridor.

He walked down to the next floor, took an elevator and was soon in the street.

An hour later the janitor's assistant came into the office to clean up and discovered Tom lying on the floor.

He summoned the head janitor, who examined the boy and then sent a call for an ambulance.

The surgeon on his arrival said that Sloan was under the influence of some drug and he wasn't sure but it might be a case of attempted suicide.

He had the boy taken downstairs and carried him off to the hospital.

Thus were both members of the firm of Swift & Sloan in trouble through the underhand tactics of Jem Dalton.

On his way uptown the crook deliberated what he would do with Swift.

Having secured the bonds he had no further reason for holding the boy, but for all that he was sore on Dick because the lad's business caution had defeated his scheme for turning the bonds into good money.

"If I hadn't watched him after I left the bonds in his hands the matter might have ended in my capture," muttered the crook. "He's a pretty shrewd chap. I'd like to get square with him. He's in my power, but I don't know just what to do with him. I must talk the matter over with my friend Barney and see what plan he can think of. Then Hawkins, the detective, must be attended to. I doubt if he could disguise himself so I wouldn't know him. He's a dangerous man to have looking for me. I owe him a score for nabbing my pal, Moss, and sending him to Portland. If I had him where I've got that boy he'd never see Scotland Yard again."

An ugly look rested on the crook's face as his mind dwelt on the detective, and there was murder in his heart at that moment.

He alighted from the Broadway car at 42d Street and boarded a crosstown car bound west.

He got off at Eleventh Avenue and was presently approaching the building on the third floor of which Dick Swift was still lying unconscious on the bed of the little room in the rear.

A couple of garbage and ash barrels were standing at the edge of the sidewalk in front of the entrance, and a slatternly looking old woman, with sharp features, was poking the refuse about with a stick.

She had been more than an hour on the street, passing slowly from one barrel to another on both sides of the way,

but the bag she carried in her hand did not seem to be any fuller than when she began.

A close observer might have noticed that she kept her eyes more on the neighborhood than on her business.

Nobody, however, paid any attention to her, for it was no uncommon thing for an old harridan like her to go around rummaging in the barrels of refuse for some prize that she could dispose of to a junkman on the avenue for the price of a glass of gin.

Her sharp eyes spied the disguised crook coming down the street.

She never took her eyes off him, though she continued to poke with her stick in the barrel she bent over.

Others beside her viewed the ministerial looking man with no little curiosity, as persons of his cloth hardly ever appeared in that neighborhood.

Although the residents of that locality were particularly friendly to individuals of Jem Dalton's profession, the crook did not consider it prudent to publicly inform them that he was going around in the disguise of a clergyman, consequently his real identity was not suspected by the habitués of the district.

They simply regarded him as what he appeared to be on the outside and rather resented his presence in their midst.

The old hag was more interested than any one else in the clerical-looking man.

As he entered the door of the building she dropped her bag and gliding across the walk shuffled in after him.

Dalton, with habitual caution, turned around to see who was behind him.

The hag saw the man's alert look and hobbled a little closer to him.

In this way the two went as far as the first landing, when the crook stopped to let the woman go by him.

Instead of passing him she suddenly straightened up and there was a snap and the touch of cold steel on Dalton's right wrist.

The rascal realized in a moment that he was pinched by a disguised detective, who he instinctively felt was Hawkins, the Scotland Yard man.

With an imprecation he raised his right arm and found that he was handcuffed to the detective's left.

He crooked his powerful left arm for a swinging blow, but paused as the muzzle of a revolver was pressed over his heart.

"Drop your arm by your side and come quietly, or I'll make you a subject for a coroner's jury," said Hawkins, in a quiet but resolute tone. "You gave me the slip in Wall Street, but you can't work that trick twice with me."

Dalton took a long breath and glared at his captor in silence, then he said:

"You've got me this time, Hawkins. I give up."

CHAPTER X.

DICK IN A BAD FIX.

It was at that identical moment that Dick Swift came to his senses on the floor above.

The hour was between five and six o'clock.

As the afternoon was a dull one, and the shutters of the room were closed, the boy could not make out his sur-

roundings very well for some moments after he sat up and looked around him.

"Where in thunder am I?" he breathed.

At that moment the sharp report of a revolver rang out on the landing below, and it was followed by the sounds of a struggle.

"Slug him, Barney!" shouted a voice.

A moment later the struggle stopped as suddenly as it began.

Then came the sound of feet mounting the stairs, and it seemed as if the persons were dragging something with them.

They reached the landing outside the door, opened the door of the adjoining room and entered, dragging the object with them.

"Search his pockets for the key so I can get these cursed darbies off my wrist," Dick heard a man say. "Then we'll lay him on the lounge, and if one of the cops in this neighborhood should come around investigating the shot there'll be nothing suspicious about an insensible old hag who appears to be sleeping."

Dick judged from the foregoing that he was in a pretty tough place.

Having no desire to remain any longer than he could help he went to the door and turned the knob.

Then he found that he was locked in.

"My gracious!" he exclaimed. "What am I up against?"

His experience in the cab flashed across his mind and instinctively he felt that he had been trapped by Jem Dalton.

There was no longer any doubt in his mind as to the real identity of the Rev. Edward Torrens.

He was the English crook in disguise.

"What a clever scoundrel that fellow is," he muttered. "But smart as he is his plan to raise the money on the Southern Railways Co. bonds through Tom and me has failed. The trick was a clever and nervy one, and might have succeeded if it hadn't been for that tell-tale card that fell out of the envelope and excited my suspicions. The result is he may say good-bye to the bonds, for they are in our safe, ready to be turned over to Detective Hawkins. That makes over \$7,000 worth of the stolen securities that Swift & Sloan have saved for the curate who was robbed in Staffordshire. I think we are entitled to the gentleman's most grateful thanks, and I don't know but we deserve some kind of a reward, too."

Then it occurred to Dick that he might be shaking hands with himself too quick, since at the present moment he appeared to be in the power of the rascal whose game he and his partner had blocked.

"He must have some object in making a prisoner of me. I'll bet he kept his eye on my movements after I left the office, and when he saw me start uptown he suspected I was going to make sure of his alleged identity. Doubtless he followed me up to the boarding-house and then back to 23d Street and afterward to the residence of the real Edward Torrens. My object then being clear to him he hired that cab and trapped me in a way that shows what a daring scamp he is and what chances he is ready to take to score a point. Now the question is what is he going to do with me? He's got me in a house in some tough part of the

city where he figures he can bulldoze me without any interference from outsiders. Well, we'll see how he comes out," said Dick, squaring his jaws. "I wonder what's going on in the next room? There's a door leading into it and a keyhole. Perhaps I can find out."

The keyhole in question gave Dick a fair view of the next room.

On a lounge lay an old woman, of the hag order, stretched out unconscious.

The boy couldn't guess that this was Detective Hawkins in disguise, who, after capturing Dalton, had been laid out by the crook's American pal, a man named Barney, who had unexpectedly come upon the scene at a critical moment for the sleuth.

At a table, with a bottle of whisky before them, sat Barney and Dalton, the latter still wearing his clerical disguise.

"Now that I've got Hawkins in my power I intend to fix him for good," said Dalton. "He's a bit too clever for me and he's got to croak, as you chaps call it on this side. He had me bagged for fair downstairs, and I didn't have a show. I'd be in a cell by this time if it hadn't been for you."

"Yes, it was mighty lucky for you that I turned up just as you were pinched," replied Barney. "He's as clever at disguising himself as you are, and I'm bound to say that you're an artist. Look at him there," nodding at the figure on the lounge. "Who'd take that for a man, and the sharpest detective, too, in all England? He's a perfect picture of one of the old hags who prowl around this district at all hours of the day and night."

Dick heard Barney's words clearly and, their import astonished him.

The person on the lounge that he could have sworn was an old woman was the English sleuth in disguise.

From the brief bit of conversation he had just overheard he understood the cause of the shot and the struggle he had heard a short time before.

The detective, in his disguise, had succeeded in surprising Dalton and nabbing him, and would have taken his bird away only for the appearance of the man Barney on the scene.

That rascal had done up the officer and rescued his pal.

Now Dalton proposed to put the English sleuth out of the way for keeps.

Dick thought that Hawkins had run into pretty hard luck.

"It was the best disguise he could have assumed to catch me," said Dalton. "He must have suspected or found out that I was hanging out in this locality, so he rigged himself out as an old woman and watched for me. He fooled me good. I saw the bogus hag digging in one of the ash cans on the walk, and I never dreamed that she wasn't the real article. Well, it's the last disguise he'll ever put on. In a day or two he'll be found floating, dead as a herring, in the river."

"You'll want help, I suppose, to carry out the job?" said Barney.

"I'll want you to find a blind to get his body to the river after I have put him to sleep," replied Dalton.

"All right. I'll be on the job any time you say. It will only make another mystery for the finest police in the

world to unravel if they can," said Barney, with a wicked laugh.

"By the way, Barney, I've got a boy in the next room that I want to dispose of, too," said Dalton.

"A boy!" exclaimed Barney, in some surprise.

"Yes, a young Wall Street stock broker."

"The dickens! How came you to get him here and what's he done to you?"

"I trapped him at the corner of Broadway and 32d Street. Got him into a cab, dosed him, and brought him here. I got acquainted with him and his partner, another chap of about his own age, at the boarding-house on 35th Street. They are college chums who went into the brokerage business in Wall Street. Their office is in the Cotton Building. I sized them up as easy marks who would sell those bonds for me that I stole in England. They didn't turn out quite as easy as I thought, but I dare say they would have sold those Baltimore & Ohio bonds only that Hawkins turned up and quered me. That cost me the bonds—over £1,000 worth. Then I tried this clerical disguise and called on them this morning with the Southern Railways Co. bonds. The chap next door agreed to sell them, but I guess he suspected something, for after I left he started uptown to find out if I really was the clerical party I had represented myself to be. I knew right away that the game would be up if he interviewed a certain young lady, who I said recommended me to him, or the real Reverend Edward Torrens, so I tried to head him off. I didn't succeed until after he had called on the minister himself. The man whose identity I had assumed happened to be out, by good luck. The young broker was heading for the boarding-house to see the young lady when I caught him. As matters stand now it doesn't make any difference to me whether he discovers the fraud or not. I have recovered the bonds," and Dalton explained the result of his visit to the office of Swift & Sloan that afternoon—a statement that gave the listening Dick quite a shock.

"Now that I've got this young chap in my hands I want to pay him back for blocking my plan for selling the bonds."

"What are you thinking of doing to him?" asked Barney.

"I thought maybe you could suggest some way of fixing him. I don't want to put him out of the way, or anything like that, but still I'd like to get even for my disappointment, which he is the cause of."

"We might put him aboard some foreign-bound vessel and send him to sea," said Barney. "He'd have to work his way to the destination of the vessel and then get back the best way he could."

"That's a good plan. We'll do it. You attend to the matter, will you?"

"It might take a week before I could find a chance to ship him off. During that time we'll have to keep him here and feed him and watch him to see that he doesn't make his escape. It's going to be a lot of bother. I'll try and think up some easier scheme—something that'll answer the same purpose."

"Do so, and if I like it as well as sending him to sea we'll put it through. Now get some pieces of rope and tie that detective hand and foot so that he can't get away,

while I'll go in and take a look at that young broker. He might have come to his senses by this time."

"He's coming in here to take a look at me. I must play 'possum and pretend I haven't come out of my trance yet," said Dick, returning to the bed, lying down and closing his eyes.

It was growing dark by this time, consequently objects in the little room, with its closed shutters, were very indistinct.

When Dalton unlocked the door and looked in he was obliged to strike a match before he could even see the outline of the boy on the bed.

Seeing the young broker stretched out motionless, with his eyes shut, he believed that the lad was still in the land of forgetfulness.

He did not take the trouble to make a close investigation, but shut and locked the door again, and returned to the other room where Barney was finishing his job of fettering the detective.

By the time he had finished, the sleuth had recovered his senses.

"Well, how do you feel, Hawkins?" grinned Dalton. "Thought you had me, didn't you, but you slipped up. That's twice you've missed your mark when things seemed to be coming your way."

"I won't miss you the next time," replied the officer.

"There won't be any next time for you, Hawkins. This is where you see your finish. You'll never see Scotland Yard again. It was an unlucky day for you that you took the job to run me down. You had a pal once named Henley. You worked together for many years and sent a lot of chaps to Portland. One night he disappeared. His fate has long been a mystery to you and the whole force. Well, you're going to vanish in the same way. A few hours hence and you and your old pal will be comparing notes together—that is if there is any future. If there isn't you'll be starting in on your last long sleep. You know me, Hawkins. You know that what I say I mean. You've had your innings, so as turn about is fair play I'll take mine. The chap who has the last laugh is the chap who comes out ahead. Now you know what you have to expect. How do you like it, my covey?"

The detective didn't like it, but he made no reply.

He had long believed that Dalton had made away with his old pal, Henley, and now he was sure of it.

If he had to die at this rascal's hands, why, it would be his fate and he couldn't help it.

In the execution of his duty he was constantly taking his life in his hands.

But it was hard luck indeed that the scoundrel who had done up his pal should do him up too.

Dalton turned away with an ugly laugh and said to Barney:

"I'm hungry. Let's go and feed. This chap will be quite safe locked in here while the boy is still dead to the world. If any one comes up looking for us they won't be able to get in and not seeing a light they'll know we're away. Come on."

They left the room, locked the door and went downstairs, leaving that part of the building wrapped in silence and darkness.

CHAPTER XI.

THE DOING UP OF DALTON AND HIS PAL BARNEY.

As soon as their footsteps died away Dick began to consider what he could do.

He was not only anxious to give Dalton the slip, but he was determined to save the detective from the fate the crook had mapped out for him.

Whether he could accomplish anything at all was a problem as matters stood.

He could not guess how long the men would be away, but whatever was done must be put through before they got back.

Sitting on the side of the bed he thought of his watch and the money he had in his pocket.

He found that neither had been touched.

He pulled out his match-safe and struck a light.

There was no gas fixture in the room.

Neither were there any in the building above the ground floor, where they had been put in by the tenant.

Dick, however, saw a small piece of candle standing on a shelf above the washstand and he lit it.

Leaving it on its perch he tried the window.

It went up easily enough, but as the cords were broken, the sash wouldn't stay up of its own accord, like any well-ordered window.

This was remedied by a piece of wood lying across the sill which Dick placed under it.

Then he opened the blinds and looked out.

He could dimly make out an open space between the building and its neighbors and those houses opposite which faced on the next street.

He could see clothes hanging on lines, which showed that the block was well populated.

There was no fire escape to furnish a road to safety for him, that useful arrangement being attached to the front of the building.

The yard was all of forty feet below him, though owing to the gloom he could not judge how far it was.

It was clear to him that to drop from the window would be as good as committing suicide, and Dick was by no means tired of life.

"It's no go," he soliloquized. "I'm here to stay and I'm afraid the detective is doomed. I wish I could reach him and set him free, then the both of us could at least put up a fight that might see us through."

He walked to the door between the two rooms and turned the handle without expecting any result.

To his surprise it yielded to his touch and opened.

"This is fortunate," he breathed.

Taking down the candle he entered the room and walked over to the lounge.

Looking down he saw the detective's keen eyes fastened on his face.

The officer did not recognize him, as Dick had not met him the day before when he was at the office.

The sleuth saw a good-looking, well-dressed boy, who did not look at all like an associate of criminals like Dalton and his pal Barney.

"Who are you?" he asked.

"My name is Dick Swift. I am Bob Sloan's partner. You were at our office yesterday after Jem Dalton, the English crook. You see I know you, Mr. Hawkins, in spite of your disguise and the fact that I never saw you before thirty minutes ago when I learned you were a prisoner in this room."

"You have come to rescue me, then?" said the detective, eagerly. "Cut me free, quick. Those rascals may be back at any moment."

"I intend to cut you loose, but rescuing you is another matter altogether, for I'm a prisoner like yourself in this part of the house."

"A prisoner!" exclaimed Hawkins, in a tone of surprise, as Dick pulled out his knife and began severing his bonds.

"Yes, but there is no time for me to explain how I happen to be so," replied the young broker. "All I need say is that Dalton, for reasons of his own, trapped me about noon to-day and brought me here under the influence of a drug. He owes me a grudge because I blocked his plan to raise money on another lot of the bonds he stole from that English minister."

By the time Dick finished this brief explanation the detective was free of the fetters that had bound him.

He sprang to his feet and quickly relieved himself of his female attire.

"If I only had my revolver now I'd be all right, but those rascals took it away from me," he said. "We must seize the chance and get away. I may be able to get back with a couple of policemen in time to catch those chaps after all."

"We'll have to get out of this room first, and the question is—how are you going to do it?" said Dick.

"Smash the door if there is no other way."

"That would make a big noise, and bring the other tenants of the building around to see what the matter was. They are probably friendly with Dalton and the man Barney and would be apt to stop us from getting away."

"There's another and a better way if you've the nerve to back me up," said the detective.

"What is that?"

"We'll wait till they return. As soon as we hear them coming up the stairs we'll hide close to the door in the dark. When they enter the room we'll attack them suddenly and try to knock them out with a single blow. At any rate by taking them by surprise we ought to be able to capture them before they can call out for help. We'll bind and gag them and I'll stand guard over them while you go to the police station and get the sergeant to send three or four officers to this house to help me take them away."

"That's a good scheme and is pretty sure to work out all right if they don't bring a third man back with them, who would surely give us trouble."

"We must chance it," said the sleuth. "Now let us look for some kind of weapon to use against them."

With the aid of the bit of candle they ransacked the closet.

In it they found a policeman's billy and a "life-preserver," or short backed implement used by crooks to knock out a victim.

"You'd better take the policeman's club, young man, and don't fail to lay your man out. Everything depends

on the first blow. I'll answer for the chap I tackle. We'll wait till they're both in the room before we make a move. I'll take the man in advance, which will probably be Dalton. Understand?"

"Yes," replied Dick.

"Now put out the candle so we can get our eyes accustomed to the dark," said the detective.

While waiting Dick told his story in detail to Hawkins.

He added what he had heard Dalton tell Barney about his late visit to the office where he had put Tom Sloan out of business and taken the Southern Railways Co.'s bonds out of the safe.

"He probably has them on his person, then," said the detective, "so I'll be able to recover them."

Altogether an hour passed away and then they heard steps mounting the stairs.

"Here they are now," said Hawkins. "Come."

They glided over to the door and listened.

They heard two men talking as they came up, and recognized the voices as those of Dalton and Barney.

The time for action had arrived and Dick gripped his stick firmly.

A key presently rattled in the lock and the door swung open, hiding the two shadowy forms that crouched against the wall.

"Shut the door, Barney, while I strike a glim," said Dalton.

As Barney shut the door, Hawkins sprang suddenly on the English crook and hit him with the "life-preserver."

The blow was well aimed and Dalton fell with a groan to the floor.

Dick swung the policeman's billy and it landed on Barney with a resounding whack, and the man fell stunned.

"We've got them," said the detective. "Strike a light."

Dick relighted the piece of candle and surveyed the two unconscious rascals.

Blood was flowing from Dalton's head, but there was no sign of a wound on Barney.

"See if that chap has a weapon," said Hawkins, pulling Dalton's revolver from his hip pocket, and also his own gun from another pocket.

Dick felt of Barney's pocket and found a derringer, which he put in his own pocket.

"I've got the envelope with the bonds," said the detective, in a tone of satisfaction. "Now we'll bind and gag them. Make a good job of it."

The two rascals were soon lying on the floor, side by side, perfectly helpless.

"We've done a neat piece of work, and I sha'n't forget what I owe you, young man. You have probably saved my life, for that scoundrel intended to serve me the way he did an old friend of mine who disappeared mysteriously a few months ago. Now, get to the police station without delay, tell the sergeant how the case stands here, and tell him he'd better send a patrol wagon around with three or four men."

"All right, sir," replied Dick.

"I'll lock the door. The officers when they come here had better signal their presence by three knocks, then I'll know they are at hand."

"I'll mention that," replied Dick. "Good-by. There's no occasion for me to come back with them. I'll go to my boarding-house and see if my partner has got there. If

he hasn't I'll have to rush down to Wall Street and look after him. Drop in to-morrow and see us."

Thus speaking Dick left the room, walked downstairs, and reached the sidewalk without incident.

He made quick time to the police station on West 37th Street and reported the facts to the officer at the desk.

Hawkins was known at this place and his object in the country understood.

The captain had promised his co-operation if he needed it.

That personage happened to be in his office and Dick was sent to him.

As soon as the young broker had told his story the captain ordered six men to get ready and go in the patrol wagon.

Dick, having done all that was expected of him, started for his boarding-house.

On reaching his room he found Tom there.

"Hello, where have you been?" asked Tom.

"In trouble," replied Dick, "like yourself."

"How do you know I've been in trouble," asked Tom, in some surprise. "Been at the office?"

"No; but I heard Jem Dalton tell a pal of his how he treated you."

"The dickens you did!" ejaculated Tom, much astonished. "Where did you run across the rascal? I suppose you know that he was the Rev. Edward Torrens in disguise?"

"Yes; I know it. I'll tell you my story after dinner. Let's go down, as I'm mighty hungry. Haven't eaten anything since breakfast."

"Did you know I was taken to the hospital?" asked Tom.

"No; I didn't know that. Were you?"

"I was discovered by the janitor unconscious on the floor of the office. He called an ambulance and the surgeon carried me to his hospital, where I was brought around. They had the nerve to accuse me of trying to commit suicide."

"You don't say."

"I had something of a job in explaining matters to the satisfaction of the head surgeon. He believed me at last and let me go. I came straight here expecting to find you wondering what detained me."

They were now at the dining-room door and postponed further explanations until after the evening meal.

They were late and had to eat alone, as all the other boarders had finished and gone to their rooms.

When they returned to their room Dick told Tom about his movements since leaving the office and how he was trapped by the disguised Dalton, drugged in the cab, and taken to the house in 41st Street, where he was locked in a small room.

He then told him how Detective Hawkins had trapped Dalton in the building, but how the tables were turned on him by the unexpected appearance of the crook's pal, Barney.

He further described how he had rescued the detective and how they had both captured the two rascals, who were doubtless safely locked up in this station house by that time.

"You had a strenuous time of it, Dick," said Tom. "Now I'll tell you how Dalton did me up."

So he told Dick of the disguised crook's visit to the office about four o'clock and what happened after he asked him (Tom) to look in the safe and see if the Southern Railways Co.'s bonds were there.

"His object was to get the bonds back," said Dick. "It's a good thing that we didn't have anything of value of our own within his reach or he would have got away with it, too. He couldn't get into the inner compartment, I feel sure, so the money we have in there we may consider safe. As for those bonds, the detective found them on Dalton's person and took charge of them. The officer has now secured the bulk of the stolen plunder, and having nabbed his man as well, his mission to this country may be considered a success."

"Thanks to us," said Tom.

"Yes. He admitted to me that he is under considerable obligations to us and he intends to give us full credit in his report to his superior when he sends it to England. He'll have to stay in this country until extradition papers have been gotten out to enable him to take Dalton back with him. As for Barney he'll get his right here in the courts."

As both boys felt rocky after their experiences of the day, they turned in early and were soon asleep.

While they slept Detective Hawkins was shaking hands with himself over the capture of the redoubtable Jem Dalton and recovery of the stolen property.

CHAPTER XII.

DICK BUYS NORTH UNION COPPER AND THEN REGRETS IT.

When they reached their office in the morning they found everything as they usually left it when they went home.

The janitor had closed the safe and pulled down the roll tops of the desks.

Opening the safe Dick remarked that Dalton had got away with their loose change and a couple of dollar bills.

"He didn't make a whole lot, did he?" laughed Tom. "He must have been disappointed."

"I guess he was. If he could have got into that inner compartment he'd have found something over \$1,000. By the way, I wonder how A. & C. got on yesterday?" said Dick, suddenly quitting the safe and making for the ticker.

"All right. It closed at 93."

"Funny how I should have forgotten all about it till now. I must think about selling to-day. I don't believe it'll go much higher."

"And I forgot to tell you that I bought 22,000 shares of Roanoke Short Line for Mr. Pratt. Our commission at the regular rate will amount to \$2,750. Not so bad for a starter."

"I should say not. You're going out again on it, aren't you?"

"Yes, in a few minutes. He put no limit on the amount he wanted. The 22,000 has doubtless been delivered and paid for. If Mr. Pratt wanted to call us off he would have sent us word."

"So I should imagine," replied Dick, continuing to read one of the Wall Street dailies.

Fifteen minutes later Tom put on his hat and went out. He had been gone about five minutes when the door opened and the sandy-haired individual who had called so many times the previous afternoon walked in.

"How do you do, sir," said Dick.

"Am I addressing one of the firm of Swift & Sloan?" asked the visitor.

"Yes, sir; I am Mr. Swift."

"My name is Gentry. I belong up State."

"Take a chair, Mr. Gentry."

"I have come to the city to sell some copper shares that a customer of mine—I'm in the feed and grain business—turned over to me in payment of a long-standing account. I suppose you buy and sell all kinds of stock?"

"Yes, sir; all kinds that have a tangible market value. What copper stock is it?"

"North Union Copper. I have 2,500 shares and I understand it is worth \$2 a share."

Dick pricked up his ears.

North Union Copper was the stock that Broker Grafton, next door, had spoken so glowingly about, and advised him by all means to buy if he could find any of it.

At any rate he had offered to take the stock off their hands at a slight advance if they didn't want to keep it themselves.

Dick picked up the previous day's Curb market quotations and looked the stock up.

It had closed at \$2.

"Do you want us to sell it for you?" he asked the caller.

"Couldn't you buy it of me? I'm in a hurry to leave the city."

"I might if you will take \$1.95 for it," replied Dick, after a moment's thought.

"Is that the best you can do?"

"Yes. It wouldn't pay me to give the market rate."

"All right. I'll take it."

"I'll give you \$1,000 on account and the balance in half an hour if you come back then."

"That is satisfactory," said Mr. Gentry.

Dick put the shares in the safe, after looking them over, and handed the man \$1,000.

After he went away Dick put on his hat and went to the safe deposit box to get the balance of the money due on the stock.

Within the hour Mr. Gentry returned and received \$3,875.

Dick then went up to the little bank on Nassau Street to watch the firm's deal in A. & C.

By noon the price was up to 95 and he went to the window to sell when a buzz of excitement in the room attracted his notice.

He soon discovered that A. & C had started to boom like a house afire, so he postponed selling.

It went up to par inside of fifteen minutes and kept on to 105½, where it came to a stop.

As there was a profit of \$2,000 in sight for the firm Dick decided to sell and not take any chance of a slump.

He put his order in and went to lunch.

It was now about two o'clock and he went down to the Curb market to see how things were getting on there.

He made inquiries about North Union Copper, which

was still ruling at a fraction above \$2, but nobody seemed to know much about it.

He learned that it had been boosted from 50 cents during the week by interested parties, but its sudden rise had not created any particular enthusiasm.

Most of the traders he spoke to said they wouldn't touch it with a ten-foot pole unless they had an order from a customer to buy it.

On the whole he found there was little demand for it, and the general impression seemed to be that it was bound to drop back to 50 cents, or even lower, in a day or two.

Not liking the outlook Dick called at the office of one of the best known Curb brokers and asked him what he thought of the stock.

"I don't think anything of it at all," was the reply.

"Isn't it worth \$2?"

"No; that's only a fictitious value created by wash sales to induce the public to bite."

"Do you know Broker Grafton?"

"I do."

"He advised us to buy the stock, and said it was the best thing in sight on the Curb."

The broker laughed.

"Why, he's right in with the boomers, and helped boost the price. If you take his word for it you'll load up on a white elephant."

"He told my partner that if we bought any of it and didn't want to hold it that he would take it off our hands at a slight advance."

"Better buy a few shares and try him. He's selling it, not buying."

"He told us just the opposite."

"You mustn't believe everything a broker tells you unless you know him to be a man of his word."

"Then I'm to infer that Mr. Grafton is not a man of his word?"

"I'm not saying anything against the gentleman."

"Then you wouldn't advise us to buy North Union Copper at \$2?"

"Not unless you want to get stuck."

Dick left the broker's office feeling that the firm was already stuck through the purchase he had made of Mr. Gentry's 2,500 shares.

"I'll take the stock around to Mr. Grafton and see if he'll keep his word. If he doesn't, by George, I'll show him up," muttered Dick. "Mr. Gentry made a good thing by bringing that stock to me. I wonder how he came to drop in at our place when there are so many other brokers in the building? Probably none of the other brokers would handle it for him at a figure that suited him. I'll have to do better than this or Tom will think I'm a bum partner."

He went straight to the Cotton Building, intending to get the shares out of the safe and take them into Grafton's office.

He realized more than ever that he and Tom were up against a hot game in trying to get ahead in Wall Street.

"A fellow can get cleaned out down here so quick that it will make his head swim," he thought. "You've got to have your wits about you all the time, or you're liable to lose the clothes on your back. I was certainly a chump to buy those North Union Copper shares before I had

looked into their actual standing on the market. Next time I'll be more careful. However, I can shake hands with myself over the A. & C. deal. We'll make \$2,000 out of that clear. I wish I'd bought two or three hundred shares while I was about it, but I had no idea it would turn out such a winner."

Dick was opening the door of his office when the door of Grafton's office opened and a pretty girl came out.

The young broker recognized her as Grafton's stenographer whose acquaintance he had accidentally made a short time since.

He had sized her up as a very nice girl and intended to know her better if he could.

He was surprised to notice that she was crying.

"Good afternoon, Miss Sedgeley. What's the trouble?" he inquired.

"I've—I've been discharged," she said, putting her handkerchief to her eyes.

"Discharged! What for?"

"Because—because Mr. Grafton lost some money through me."

"Come inside and tell me all about it. Maybe I can get him to take you back."

Dick ushered her into his office and told her to sit down.

"How did you cause Mr. Grafton to lose money?" he asked her kindly.

"Yesterday morning while I was taking dictation from Mr. Grafton, a customer came into the private room and Mr. Grafton began talking to him about a stock called North Union Copper."

"North Union Copper!" exclaimed Dick, in a tone of interest.

"Yes. As Mr. Grafton was not through with me I sat there while they were talking. This has often happened before."

"Go on."

"Mr. Grafton was praising up North Union Copper and was advising the gentleman to buy it. He said he was buying it himself for an investment. Finally he told the gentleman if he got hold of any of it and didn't want to keep it to bring it around and he would take it off his hands at a slight advance."

"He said that, did he?" said Dick, more interested than ever.

"Yes, for I heard him, and that is where the trouble was."

"How is that?"

"I'm going to tell you. The gentleman went away, but he returned this afternoon while I was taking some more dictation. He had 1,000 shares of North Union Copper which he offered to Mr. Grafton. He said a man from up the State called on him yesterday and offered to sell him the 1,000 shares for \$1,500 cash, as he said he needed the money right away. As he knew the stock was ruling at \$2 he bought it, thinking he had got hold of a good thing. He discovered that he could use the money to better advantage than keeping it locked up in the copper stock, so he asked Mr. Grafton to take it off his hands for \$1.75 a share, or whatever he was willing to pay above \$1.50, as he had promised to do. Mr. Grafton, however, doubled and said he didn't want any more of the stock. He said that he had said he would buy any of the stock

from him. The gentleman got angry and appealed to me as a witness of Mr. Grafton's statement. Well, I had to admit that I heard Mr. Grafton say he would buy the stock. The result was that the gentleman said he would sue my employer if he didn't make good. So Mr. Grafton had to take the stock from him and pay him for it. Then he told me was going to discharge me for causing him to lose money. I said I didn't see how he could lose any money by buying the stock at \$1.60, which was the price he paid, when its market value was \$2. He said the market price was no guide to its real value, but he took that back a moment later and went on with his dictation. A little while ago he called me in and told me that he didn't want me any more. He handed me my wages and told me to go at once, and I did."

"Well, it's too bad, Miss Sedgeley. I don't think Mr. Grafton treated you just right. I'll have a talk with him and see if he'll take you back. If he won't perhaps we'll hire you. We need somebody in the office when my partner and I are both out together, as we're likely to be as soon as business picks up. You come in to-morrow about noon and I'll let you know how things look."

"Thank you, Mr. Swift. I will call to-morrow. Good-by."

"Good-by," said Dick, and the door closed on the young lady.

CHAPTER XIII.

CONCLUSION.

Shortly after Miss Sedgeley had gone away Tom came into the office.

Dick had deferred his visit to Broker Grafton in order to consult with him.

"Well," said Tom, throwing his hat on top of his desk, shoving up the roll top and seating himself, "I've cleaned up about all the Roanoke Short Line in sight. I bought 18,000 shares to-day. That makes 40,000 altogether. Pretty good for two days' work, don't you think? I've used up a lot of shoe leather and visited so many brokers that it would make me dizzy to keep count of them. Our commission on this order will foot up \$5,000. That ought to pay our expenses for a year and leave a balance in our favor."

"You can add to that \$2,000 profit that we have made out of A. & C. I suppose you heard that it boomed up to 105 to-day."

"No, I haven't kept track of it. Too busy with Roanoke Short Line. So you sold out at 105, eh? We've done fine with that deal."

"Yes, and I've been kicking myself because I didn't buy twice as much of the stock. We could have done it just as well as not."

"Oh, well, you couldn't guess it would turn out so good."

"That's true. I was going to sell at 95. In fact I would have done so only the boom began just as I started for the margin clerk's window. A difference of five minutes in that boom would have put us out of a thousand dollars."

"It makes a fellow feel as happy as a clam at high tide."

"You won't feel so happy when I tell you that I put my foot in it on another deal I made."

"What did you go into that has turned out badly?"

"You know Broker Grafton, our next door neighbor, was in here yesterday cracking up North Union Copper to you?"

"I intended to investigate the stock, but unfortunately didn't get a chance yesterday owing to my run-in with the English crook. Well, this morning, after you went out, a man, who said his name was Gentry, a feed and grain dealer from up-State, came in here and said he had 2,500 shares of North Union Copper that he was anxious to sell at the market. Believing that Grafton would take it off our hands I offered him \$1.95 for the shares and he took me up. I paid him the money and he went away. Then I went to the little bank and put in about three hours there. After selling A. & C. I went down to the Curb to see how North Union Copper was doing. It was still up to \$2, but nothing seemed to be doing in it. I talked with some of the traders and they gave me to understand that the stock was N.G. You can imagine how that made me feel. To make sure about it I called on one of the leading Curb brokers and had a talk with him about it."

Dick then gave his partner the substance of the said conversation.

"It looks to me as if we're stuck. I don't believe Grafton will take the stock from us at any figure," continued Dick.

"You can't be certain of that until you have tried him," said Tom.

"I have additional reason for believing he won't take it."

"What is it?"

"I suppose you remember my telling you about Miss Sedgely, Grafton's stenographer?"

"Yes."

"Well, he fired her this afternoon in connection with North Union Copper."

Dick related the facts to Tom as the young lady had stated them to him.

"I guess Grafton is one of those foxy traders who make a practice of doing every one they can get around. I agree with you now that we've been taken in. What are we going to do about it?"

"We must retaliate in some way. I'm going to offer him the stock at \$2, or five cents above what we paid for it. That is about fifteen cents under the ruling market. If he refuses to keep his word with us there'll be something doing, if I land in jail over it," said Dick, with a resolute look.

"If Grafton won't keep his word I don't see how we can make him."

"You leave that to me. By the way, I half promised to give Miss Sedgely a job with us if Grafton won't take her back. Now, I have an idea that she knows a lot about her late employer's tricks. I'm going to have a talk with her to-morrow when she comes here and maybe she'll tell me how I can turn the screws on him so as to make him take over that stock."

"It's just such tricks as that that makes the Wall Street game such a hot one," said Tom.

"Well, we won't argue the matter any more to-day. It's time we went home. To-morrow I'll see what I can do with our neighbor Grafton."

So the boys shut up shop and went uptown.

Dick decided not to call on Grafton until he had talked to Miss Sedgely.

She was to call at noon and he waited for her.

Half-past twelve came around and she failed to show up.

Dick waited till one, and as she didn't come he told Tom that he wouldn't wait any longer.

"I'm hungry. Let's go to lunch?" he said.

"All right," replied Tom, putting on his hat.

They locked up and were passing the door of Grafton's private office when they heard a knocking on the glass.

"What's that?" exclaimed Dick.

"Somebody is knocking on the glass," replied Tom.

"What are they doing that for?"

"You've got me."

"Please let me out," said a girl's voice.

"Hello! There's something wrong," cried Dick.

He tried the door of the reception-room and found it locked.

Then he put his eye to the keyhole of the door of the private room.

He couldn't see anybody inside, so he said:

"Who's there, and what do you want?"

"I want to get out. Mr. Grafton has locked me in here," replied a girl's voice that sounded like the broker's late stenographer.

"Are you Miss Sedgely?" asked Dick.

"Yes."

"You say that Mr. Grafton locked you in there?"

"Yes."

"What did he do that for?"

"He wants me to sign a paper, but I don't want to do it, because it isn't the truth."

"Well, he's got no right to keep you in there against your will, no matter what reason he has for doing so. Step back from the door and I'll have you out in short order."

"What are you going to do, Dick?" asked Tom.

"Smash the glass in and the door with it if I can," said Dick.

At that moment Broker Grafton appeared coming from the elevator.

He saw the boys standing in front of his door and suspected that they were talking to his late stenographer who, for reasons of his own, he was trying to bulldoze into signing a paper he had prepared.

"Hold on, there, what are you doing?" shouted Broker Grafton, rushing forward as Dick lifted his foot and gave the glass a blow that shattered it into fragments.

Tom stepped between his chum and the irate trader.

"I'll have you arrested!" roared Grafton, in a white heat of rage.

Dick's reply was another blow on the door that rattled it on its hinges.

The broker tried to throw Tom aside in order to get at Dick, but the athletic lad grasped him around the waist from behind and held him as he might have held an opponent in a football game, and Grafton struggled in vain to shake him off.

The crashing of the glass and the disturbance naturally attracted a whole lot of attention, as well as two or three clerks and customers, from the office at the end of the corridor, came out to see what the trouble was.

"What is the matter?" asked a broker, coming forward.
 "Why are you smashing that door?"

"To let the young lady out. Grafton locked her into his private room to bull-doze her into signing some kind of a paper. He had no right to do such a thing, and I guess she has it in her power to make things hot for him," replied Dick.

"You should have called the janitor and got him to open the door. You can be arrested and prosecuted for malicious mischief, and you'll have to pay for the damage you have done," said the broker.

"I'm ready to face the consequences, but I'll wager Grafton will get all that is coming to him before I am done with him," said Dick.

"Let the man go," said another broker to Tom.

Tom released the angry trader.

He rushed up to Tom and shook his fist in his face.

"I'll have the law on you for this," he roared.

"All right. Now open the door and let Miss Sedgeley out."

Grafton saw that he couldn't avoid doing it in the face of the curious crowd and so the girl was released from her embarrassing position.

"Go and get that stock, Tom, and we'll settle with Mr. Grafton right now," said Dick.

Tom rushed into the office to get it while Dick detained the girl in the corridor to explain the situation to the on-lookers.

The broker had entered his office and was pacing up and down like a wild man.

He realized that he had placed himself in a bad light and was afraid to send for a policeman as was his first intention.

By the time Tom returned with the stock the crowd was beginning to disperse, and then Dick, his partner and Miss Sedgeley walked in on Grafton.

"Get out of here," shouted the broker.

"We will after we have settled a little matter with you," replied Dick, coolly.

"I don't want anything to do with you," said Grafton.

"You have to listen to me. You practically gave us an order to buy North Union Copper for you. Well, here are 2,500 shares for which I gave \$1.95. That is twenty cents under the present market price. Give us your check for what we paid for it, \$4,875, and we'll call the matter square."

"Get out of here, the three of you."

"Do you refuse to take the stock and pay for it?"

"Get out of here, I tell you."

"All right. We'll give you a showing up that will make your hair curl. Besides, I'll see that Miss Sedgeley gets out a warrant for your arrest for locking her in your office. You can have me arrested for smashing your door if you want to, but I'll gamble on it you'll get the worst of this business all around."

"What have I got to do with that stock?"

"You agreed to take it off our hands if we bought any of it."

"I never did."

"I say you did, and I can prove that the whole thing was a put-up job on your part to get us to buy it at a price as high as it's worth. Now we don't propose to

be skinned. Unless you settle with us we'll help this young lady to prosecute you, and we'll not only show up your methods in court but all through the Street. Miss Sedgeley will make a good witness against you, for she knows how you have been carrying on business."

Grafton realized that he was in a hole, and that the easiest way out of it was to take the stock and give the boys his check for the money, which he did with very bad grace.

As soon as Dick got the check in his hands the three walked out.

"Come to work to-morrow, Miss Sedgeley," said Dick. "We'll give you the same wages you got from Grafton. You'll have a sinecure for awhile, but you're entitled to it, for we wouldn't have got our money out of the old rascal if we didn't have you to back us up."

Next day they sent a statement to Mr. Pratt concerning the 40,000 shares of Roanoke Short Line they had purchased for him, and he sent his check for the regular commission.

Dick also settled with the little bank about the A. & C. deal.

Altogether the firm of college chums were \$7,000 to the good.

From that on they got a customer now and then, and by advertising in several of the Wall Street papers they began to build up quite a little business.

They also made and lost money on their various private deals, but on the whole the balance was in their favor.

In the meantime they appeared in court against Jem Dalton and Barney.

The latter was sent up the river for two years, while the former was taken back to England, tried and sent to Portland prison for fifteen years.

The boys received a very nice letter from the vicar in Staffordshire, whose stolen securities they were largely instrumental in recovering, enclosing a draft for £100, or \$500, in testimony of his appreciation of their services in the matter.

To-day the two college chums are at the head of a big business in Wall Street and are doing fine, but they never forget the strenuous days of their start when they were up against a hot game.

THE END.

Read "A BIG CONTRACT; OR, THE POOR BOY WHO WON," which will be the next number (237) of "Fame and Fortune Weekly."

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GOOD STORIES.

The final dimensions of the great drydock which the United States Navy is building at Pearl Harbor, in the Hawaiian Islands, show that the Government is wisely building for the future. The dock will be 1,152 feet long from the coping to the outer sill, 140 feet wide at the top and will have 35 feet of water over the entrance sill at mean high-water level. There will be a sill at the middle of the dock for an intermediate caisson which will divide it into two docks, 575 feet and 532 feet long respectively.

During a fire in Nampa, Idaho, a whole square was destroyed, among the buildings being a furniture store, the proprietor of which showed his pluck by immediately commencing the erection of a new building of concrete. Having at the time a carload of iron beds on hand, he had them encased in the walls to lend strength to the building by holding the cement together, the walls being modeled round the bedsteads. The building will probably be something of a wonder to a later generation when it falls into decay.

The Arctic mail left Edmonton the other day. About the end of the month it will reach its destination, Fort McPherson, on the Peel River, about forty miles from the point where the great Mackenzie River debouches into the Arctic Ocean. A high piled up with mail bags also drove away from the Hudson's Bay Company's store. Its delivery will not be completed for two full months. At Lac La Biche three dog trains are in waiting for their 2,000-mile journey with messages from Christendom up into the land where the sun does not shine in winter. Fort McPherson is served with but two mails a year, one carried by dog trains in the winter and the other by the Hudson's Bay Company's steamer in midsummer.

Copenhagen is a city of 500,000 inhabitants. During a week's stay I have seen no seller of matches or bootlaces, no gutter merchant, no blind or other afflicted persons about the streets asking for alms—not one single sign of distress due to poverty. I have explored the artisans' quarters by day and late at night. There is not a single spot in the whole of Copenhagen that could be compared even remotely to the slums in our large towns. There are no unemployed hanging about the street corners, no unkempt women standing idly at the doors, no ragged and dirty children playing in the gutter. There are no dirty houses, with dirty or broken windows, mended with bits of paper, and a ragged apron or a torn bedcloth doing duty for a curtain.

If Nature had set out with the determination to assure for the United States the premier position in the steel industry of the world, she could scarcely have done so more effectively than by spreading out around the western and southern shores of Lake Superior those huge deposits of iron ore often referred to. Not only do the ore formations cover vast areas, but in the wonderful Mesabi mines the ore lies practically at the surface of the ground, and frequently, after a few feet of overlying material have been stripped off, the cars can be run right into the mine and loaded directly by steam shovels. Furthermore, the Lake Superior ore is of unusual richness, much of it running over 60 per cent. iron. The principal mines are located in ranges, of which the most famous are the Menominee, Marquette and Gogebic ranges in Michigan and the Vermillion and Mesabi ranges in Minnesota. The mines are located from twenty-five to seventy-five miles from the shores of Lake Superior. Eight separate railroads carry the ore to as many shipping ports on the lake, where it is unloaded into twenty-six docks having a total storage capacity of 1,326,616 tons.

JOKES AND JESTS.

A good hay rake has about fifteen teeth—dependent, of course, on the age of the rake.

"William is getting up a literary club." "Hickory is the only kind that will ever bring him to his senses," said the old man.

Penitent Old Lady—I have been a great sinner more than eighty years and didn't know it. Old Colored Servant—I knowed it all de time!

"Will you excuse me, mother, if I don't go in with you? You see, father said I was to live within my means, and I don't feel as if I could afford the collection."

"Are you guilty or not guilty?" asked the magistrate of the man accused of theft. "What's the use o' me sayin' 'not guilty?' I said that last time an' you wouldn't believe me."

Do not drain off your swamp land. Plant tadpoles and raise frogs and ship the hops to Milwaukee. Here we may say that the hop is somewhat larger than the skip, though not so large as the jump.

The receiver for the defunct corporation was making his first report. "Your honor," he said, "I find that the distinguished gentlemen composing the corporation had received everything before I got there."

"What!" exclaimed the husband. "You drew your savings from the bank, went to a broker's office and bought Z, X, and Y. stock at 14, when it has been dropping like a rock?" "But, my dear," argued the wife, "it was such a bargain. Why, during the short time I was in the office I saw the man mark it down to 14 from 45!"

She finished her piano solo with a pretty flourish, and, whirling around on the stool, faced the young man. She was proud of her effort, but she was a modest young woman. "You see," she said, "you see I really play very poorly, just as I told you." "Yes," he replied, "but you are truthful, and that is more than being artistic." Question—Was the young man ever invited to call again? Answer—He was not!

TWO FIGHTS FOR LIFE

By Kit Clyde.

"You are a young country clown, sir! Out of my way, or I'll-horsewhip you!"

The speaker was a man in the prime of life, and he was mounted on a strong hunter in a country road near a pleasant village in Devonshire, England.

An uplifted whip was in his hand, an expression of anger and annoyance was on his face, and his flashing eyes were bent on a stripling who stood before him on the highway.

That "stripling" was not more than eighteen; he was clothed in humble attire, and his manner and words somewhat justified the richly-attired rider in calling him a "country clown," as he presented an uncouth figure, while his voice was harsh and strong.

The "country clown" held the bridle of the hunter, and he did not seem to mind the insulting remarks or the uplifted whip, as he demanded:

"Where's my sister, Captain Hardy? You must give her back to us!"

"What do I know or care about your sister, you stupid fool? Hands off, or——"

A cry of rage burst from the youth as the heavy lash descended on his shoulder and arm, and the next moment the horse was free.

Another mocking laugh rang out from the rider, as, raising the whip again, he struck the angry youth across the face, saying:

"If you ever intercept me on the highway again, I'll cut you to pieces."

And then Captain Hardy rode on, leaving the victim writhing with pain and rage, and powerless to think or act, or call out the bitter defiance and hate that was agitating his young heart.

"I'll kill him!" muttered (or rather hissed) the young clown, at length, as he started after the rider; "I'll murder him if I hang for it, and before he's an hour older. He robbed us of Annie; he's broken poor mother's heart; and he lashed me as if I were one of his own hounds. Captain Hardy, I'll kill you, if I have to follow you to the end of the earth."

Seizing a heavy stone as he ran along, the vengeful youth darted through the woodland path, until he struck out on a green lawn leading up to a substantial mansion.

"He'll pass near me here," muttered the "young clown," as he darted into the wood again. "I'll knock him from his horse; I'll lash him on his own lawn with his own whip; and then I'll be off to the wars. Who can tell but I'll face him as his equal one day?"

On rode Captain Hardy, all unconscious of the danger awaiting him, and thinking only of the fair country girl whose heart he had won.

"Egad," muttered the soldier, aloud, "but I'd make her my wife were it not for her clownish connections, and——"

Out from the wood darted the clownish brother; up went the vengeful arm; and then down on the green lawn rolled the gallant soldier, half-stunned by the blow.

"Lash me, will you, you purse-proud villain!" yelled the clown, as he sprang forward and tore the whip from the fallen man's hand. "There, now, for you—and there—and take that!"

"Oh, but I could murder you!"

"Murder—murder!" yelled a female voice, as a beautiful

young girl ran out from the wood. "Oh, William—William, for shame! To beat Captain Hardy, my husband."

"Your husband, Annie!" gasped the youth, desisting with the whip, and turning to his sister. "Come home to mother, will you? Come, I say, or I'll lash you as——"

"You mongrel cur!" yelled Captain Hardy, as he sprang from the grass and darted at his assailant. "I'll have your life for this insult. Stand aside, Annie. By heavens! I'd kill him, if he were my own father!"

The slender "country clown" was no match for that athletic soldier, even though he held the heavy riding-whip.

And that whip was soon in Captain Hardy's hand.

Springing away from his powerful antagonist, the youth darted for the stone with which he had felled Captain Hardy from his horse, and the next instant the proud soldier was stretched on the lawn, with the blood flowing from his temple.

"Oh gracious heavens! you have killed him now, William!" cried his sister.

"I hope so," triumphed the brother. "I'm ready to hang for——"

"The people from the hall are coming!" cried Annie. "Oh, William, you will be killed—hanged! And think of mother! Fly—fly! There's the horse, and you can escape."

"Will you go home?" demanded the brother.

"I will—I will! I swear it, William."

"Away with you and me, then!" cried the youth, dragging his sister toward the hunter.

In a moment he placed his sister on the powerful hunter, and then sprung up behind her.

There was a fierce hunt after the lad as he rode across the country; but he was riding the best animal in the neighborhood, and he left his pursuers behind.

Annie Denver was weeping in her mother's arms that evening, and her brother was a fugitive, with the hounds of the law on his track.

Two days after William Denver was taking a last look at the white cliffs of England as he stood on board of an outward-bound vessel.

Captain Hardy was a raving, delirious invalid in his own house, with a cut on his temple that would leave a mark there while he lived.

"General Hardy, that is a remarkable scar on your temple. One of your beauty-spots from Waterloo, I presume?"

"Yes—no—that is—— Oh, hang it, Malcolm, let us talk no more to-night of battles and scars. Fill up the wine, and let the toast be 'Dear Woman.'"

Ten years had passed away since General Hardy encountered William Denver on the lawn at Devonshire, and during that time great changes occurred in Europe.

Captain Hardy (now a general) had served with honor in the English army; he had shared in the desperate struggle at Waterloo, and he was now enjoying himself in the gay capital of France, and on the lookout for a young and beautiful wife, in the person of a French countess of note.

On the evening in question he was dining at a friend's house, and among the male guests were many who had served in the armies of Europe.

Among those guests was a tall officer, bearded and bronzed, who had won distinguished renown in the Prussian service and who excited much curiosity, as no one could tell of the land of his birth or of his early life.

The guest noticed the dark scowl that passed over General Hardy's face when Colonel Malcolm alluded to the scar on his temple; and his keen eyes were fixed on the man as they responded to the toast of "Dear Woman."

The ladies of the entertainment had retired to an adjoining

apartment, leaving the gallant veterans to enjoy their wine without restriction.

Colonel Malcolm, who was a Scotchman, and possessed all the tenacity of his race, was not satisfied with General Hardy's answer to the inquiry about the scar, and he soon returned to the charge, saying:

"That is not a saber cut, General Hardy, if I am a judge. Fall from your horse, eh?"

"You are very curious about my scar, Malcolm," was the reply. "I'll wager a thousand pounds no gentleman present can tell how I received the scar."

"I'll accept that offer," replied a stern voice, as the tall Prussian officer arose from his seat and confronted the Englishman.

"I repeat, General Hardy," said the Prussian, as he saluted the Englishman, "that I accept the wager. I will bet one thousand pounds that I name the place, the hour, wherein you received that scar."

"'Tis impossible, sir!" cried the Englishman, in angry tones, "unless you are——"

"There is my purse, sir," interrupted the tall Prussian, "and——"

"Here is my sword, sir," cried General Hardy, in a rage. "You offer insult, sir."

"I accept both challenges," said the Prussian, as he laid his sword beside his purse. "But I demand that we take them in order. First, as to the scar. You received that at the hands of a beardless country clown, who horsewhipped you at the same time for stealing his sister from her humble home."

"Liar! slanderer! you will die for this insult!" cried General Hardy, dashing his wine-glass at the Prussian.

"Gentlemen, soldiers," cried the host, "I protest against such——"

"Gentlemen, soldiers—men of honor!" cried the tall Prussian, "I swear to you as a soldier that I assert the truth. I am the 'country clown' who felled that scoundrel from his horse, on his own lawn, and then lashed him."

"'Tis an infamous falsehood, and I claim satisfaction at once—on the instant!" said General Hardy, as he strode to the door, sword in hand.

"Colonel Malcolm, you will do me the honor?"

"Certainly, general," replied Malcolm.

"And my friend, General Wesler, will accompany me," cried the Prussian officer, who was no other than William Denver—the "country clown"—who had entered the Prussian army years before and fought his way to great distinction.

"Let none save the principals and their seconds leave the room, friends," cried the host. "This affair must be kept secret."

"To the park," cried General Hardy, as he strode down the stairs. "I'll kill you, you infernal hound."

"Faith, and you'll have to keep cool, general," replied Colonel Malcolm. "I know the Prussian, and he is a master of his weapon."

"I'll kill the scoundrel!" hissed the angry man. "I'll trample him to the dust!"

Five minutes after, the old foes were facing each other in a secluded spot in a neighboring park; and then the clashing of rapiers rang out on the night air.

The deadly struggle had not lasted two minutes, when four ladies could be perceived peeping out through the leaves of a clump near by.

One of these ladies was the French countess to whom General Hardy was attached, and her companion was her maid.

Clash—clash—clash! went the deadly blades, as the stalwart, skillful men put forth all their best points in the life and death struggle, while the seconds and the observers held their breath in suspense.

Ten minutes of thrusts, feints, and parries, and General Hardy was giving way before his more active young opponent.

And then feeling that he must make a desperate effort for his life and honor, the English general made a fearful lunge at the "country clown."

With a brilliant move William Denver dashed the rapier from his enemy's hand, and the next instant his own blade was thrust in the doomed man's breast, as he cried:

"I swore it ten years ago, and I have kept my word. Mother, sister—behold how I treat the man who lashed the country clown!"

"Fool," groaned the dying man, "your sister was my wedded wife. I lied when I told her of the false marriage."

"Thank God!" muttered a voice behind the bushes. "Mother, I can die happy now."

And out rushed William's mother and sister, followed by the French countess and her maid.

General Hardy was conveyed to the house, and he lived long enough to prove his assertion that Annie was his lawful wife.

Six months after, General Drexel, of the Prussian army (alias Will Denver), married the beautiful French lady who had witnessed the bloody duel in the park.

Three highwaymen in Chicago held up a pedestrian at the point of a pistol and found in his pockets just 46 cents. Judge Kersten sentenced the three to life imprisonment. This severe sentence is legal according to a law passed two years ago, declaring that when a pistol is displayed to enforce the demand of a highwayman life imprisonment is the penalty.

The taxicab is pushing the horse out of business and the wireless telegraph is crowding out the carrier pigeons. As each of the important warships of France has now wireless apparatus, there is no longer any use for the pigeons. The French Minister of Marine has intimated that after next New Year's Day the maritime dove-cote at Rochefort will not be maintained.

In the island of Minora, one of the Philippines, the humming-birds are pugnacious little creatures. An American hunting party had a novel experience with them. One of the huntsmen wandered off from his comrades, but soon his screams were heard. Thousands of the humming-birds had attacked him and wounded him in hundreds of spots on his face and neck. When rescued he was streaming with blood.

"The United States soldier is tougher and stronger—physically tougher—than he was before the Spanish war," said Capt. R. E. Thomas, of Wilmington, Del. "It is not the war which is to be thanked for it. Athletic training has done the work. It is said this country gives far more attention to the physical culture of its soldiers than does either Great Britain, France or Germany. While they require a daily setting up exercise similar to our own, these gun calisthenics and other prescribed forms of muscle stretching are supplemented in this country by athletic sports. These are not compulsory. They do not need to be. They have been entered into so heartily that every post of any size has its organization, which backs its track team, its football eleven or its baseball nine. This is just what the War Department wants them to do, as it has organized a bureau for the encouragement of athletics. Nearly every garrison has its committee, consisting of at least one commissioned officer in addition to non-commissioned officers and privates, to arrange programs for field days, organize teams and pick out the star men of the command to represent it in the various events."

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